

Public Involvement Overview

December 2009

	Month
Hotline Calls*	10
Comment Sense Submissions/Inquiries**	18
FOIA requests	0
Speakers Bureau	
Presentation/Events	22
Neighborhood Boards	0
TAC	0
Community meetings	1

*Calls directly to the hotline 808.566.2299

** Includes all comments/inquiries via Project website from the end of the official DEIS comment period on February 6, 2009 to the end of the month.

December 2009 website and hotline comments

Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
12/07/2009	I am presently employed by WMATA (since 1982) in Rail Car Maintenance. I am interested in your new system.
12/12/2009	What Engineering Firms are providing the Engineering Design and Construction Oversight for the project? I am specially looking for the Engineering Firm pertaining to the Track Construction.
12/13/2009	Are you hiring for rail operations or rail operations supervisor. If yes how can I apply? Thanks Kristi
12/14/2009	Hey, like the movie - Erin Brockavich, where school kids got cancer from playing under power lines, what is the similarity of pollution output by spinning metal disks and brakes, that disperse from Rail carrying so many people past neighborhoods as such. Could you ask the EPA to include that in their study, please? Citizen Aaron
12/16/2009	We wish to obtain a planholder list for this project. Could you let us know how we may obtain this information. Thank you. Hans von Lange President InterTran Corporation
12/21/2009	Could you please forward me the point-of-contact for transportation security for this project?
12/23/2009	Where in Waikiki is the future transit rail extension planned to go? We have just purchased a condo in Waikiki and were not aware that the transit line would be going through Waikiki. I have looked at the tiny map on your website but cannot see what route is proposed. My greatest fear is that the route will go along the Ala Wai canal, which is where we have just purchased a unit in a quiet, peaceful building. Would you please respond quickly? Thank you. Randi
12/29/2009	Hi, I have these domains and they get thousands of visitors from all over the world from people inquiring about the upcoming project. They are looking for you but come to me. When rail comes they will be getting 10,000 a day. DO YOU WANT THIS TRAFFIC? The city should get this traffic. stevecurty@hawaii.rr.com ehonolulutransit.com hawaiimasstransit.com hawaiimasstransit.net hawaiiirail.com hawaiiirail.info hawaiiirailtransit.com hawaiiirail.net hawaiiirailjob.com hawaiiirailjobs.com hawaiiirailroad.com hawaiiirailtransit.net hawaiiirailtransit.org hawaiiirapidtransit.com hawaiiitransit.info hawaiiitransit.org hawaiiitransitauthority.com hawaiiitransitjob.net hawaiiitransitjob.org hawaiiitransitjobs.net

Submission Date	Submission Content/Notes
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ISLAND COMMENTARY

Rail transit: Elevated train promises Honolulu a better future

By Hannah Miyamoto

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 01, 2009

Now that the federal government has allowed the Honolulu rail transit project to enter preliminary design, long-suffering Ewa-side residents know that construction will start in just months.

Unfortunately, opponents - some of whom also sued to stop bus rapid transit - insist on stalling this vital project. Even Gov. Linda Lingle says she will "take her time" studying the environmental impact statement before signing off.

The rail and feeder bus system plan has received ample study and debate, and extended delay will cost taxpayers millions of dollars, without any public benefit. No useful "new ideas" have been raised since the City Council set the train route in January, and the suggested alternatives would not adequately reduce the problems the elevated rail line will address; all would cause more problems than they would solve.

Look behind the cool, professional words of the Draft EIS: It says that you, I and our children have two futures. Start with the one without rail.

In 2030, if rail is not built, although island residents will drive only 17 percent more than now, they will waste 43 percent more time in traffic. Where H-1 passes Kapolei, morning traffic will be twice as heavy as now, in both directions.

On H-1 through Pearl City, the state's busiest road, traffic will rise 15-20 percent. Our transportation arteries will suffer a heart attack.

In the other future, if rail is built, traffic delays for island drivers in 2030 will be four times less than if rail is not built, and morning H-1 traffic through Pearl City will increase only 9-12 percent from current levels.

By relieving the most congested roads, rail will have a major impact on congestion, even though it will only slightly reduce the amount of driving on Oahu.

Island residents and visitors will use the train 95,000 times every weekday, increasing transit ridership in Oahu 21 percent more than if no train is built. Furthermore, every two people attracted to the train will attract almost one more rider to the bus. Overall, 68 percent of the train riders will ride a bus to their

station, and 17 percent will walk; only 14 percent of rail riders will park at the station or get dropped off by someone else.

More island residents will choose transit because the average speed (rail and bus) will rise to 16.5 mph, faster than the

current national average for light rail transit. Even people living off the rail line will benefit. For example, transit riders in Mililani will reach downtown 45 minutes faster than now, while riders in Ewa will arrive almost half an hour sooner. Trips from Waipahu to Waikiki will take about half the time.

In a future without a rail system, people in Honolulu will board a bus 314,000 times daily, and it will cost almost \$3.60 to provide each ride. In a future with rail, people will board a bus or train 450,000 times daily, at less than \$3.25 per ride.

Some think the elevated rail project should be slowed to check whether an at-grade rail line would be better. There is no need, because building a partly street-level line, as the architects association suggests, would be almost like not building any rail system.

The big problem is that the architects want to run tracks along the street where an elevated track will speed travel the most: from Middle Street in Kalihi to downtown and Ala Moana.

Even the architects admit that an at-grade light rail train will take 23 minutes to cross that segment, while the elevated train will take only 12 minutes. Since the Route C express bus connects these points in 26 minutes or less now, an at-grade rail line will not attract enough new riders to justify building it.

Furthermore, even if a streetcar went as fast as the elevated train, the congestion from taking away street lanes, or the loss of historic buildings needed to widen streets, would not justify building an at-grade line.

We and our children face one of two futures: with elevated rail, or without elevated rail. Practically speaking, there is no third choice. Now is the time to seize our opportunities and make the right choice: the elevated rail transit line from Kapolei to Ala Moana.

Hannah Miyamoto has a bachelor's degree in civil engineering, specializing in transportation, from the University of Minnesota. She led the Sierra Club in developing policies on transportation, land use and the environment in the early 1990s and now is a Ph.D. student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

Find this article at:

http://www.starbulletin.com/editorials/Rail_transit_Elevated_train_promises_Honolulu_a_better_future.html

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



ISLAND COMMENTARY

Street-level rail system would stimulate businesses

By Larry Geller

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 01, 2009

Choosing a transit system ought to be a community project, part of planning the ideal urban and suburban environments we wish to have.

Instead of spending millions to persuade us, that money could better be spent assisting us to plan our own living spaces and transit options. City planning shouldn't be subservient to politics or powered by political contributions.

The choice of elevated or grade-level transit determines who reaps the economic benefits of the system.

No small business or retail store makes profit lying in the shadows underneath elevated tracks - just the opposite, the clang of steel wheels signals that business is passing them by.

Instead, developers of mega-complexes surrounding the stations will command inflated rents for retail space economically unavailable to mom-and-pop stores. Commuters will find Macy's, Starbucks and chain restaurants greeting them as they disembark, not the local okazuya.

What we could have for Honolulu - but won't, if the mayor's elevated rail system goes forward - is a vibrant retail corridor at ground level extending as far as the length of the system. Riders would see new shops through the tram windows and get off to visit them. New restaurants would fill with curious commuters as soon as they open their doors. Transit tweeters would spread the word of any hot new find along the right-of-way. That's how it works in Portland, and there's no reason why Honolulu should not have the same opportunity to prosper.

Nor does it have to be limited to the Honolulu core. With a grade-level system, expect retail to spread all the way to Waianae. There's nothing about an elevated line that will bring that kind of retail and small business prosperity to our city. Nothing.

In Portland, there is no fare for travel in the city center. Imagine that in Honolulu: One could pop off the tram on the way home to pick up the dry cleaning, buy some eggs and bacon for tomorrow's breakfast, or pick up a replacement light bulb at the hardware store. That's possible with grade-level transit, unthinkable with overhead rail.

No home or condo dweller benefits from the noise of trains overhead or whizzing past the lanai. Having

a tram stop within a block or two adds greatly to property values and convenience.

Grade-level transit brings positive economic benefit to small business that we will need to boost recovery from a long economic downturn. It will never hurt small business to have improved access and free advertising (just open, they will come). Construction jobs disappear when the system is completed, but a vibrant urban corridor will remain an asset to Honolulu on into the future.

The choice is ours, not the mayor's, whether we will go for it or let developers be the only winners in Honolulu's transit future.

Larry Geller is a resident of Nuuanu.

Find this article at:

http://www.starbulletin.com/editorials/20091201_Streetlevel_rail_system_would_stimulate_businesses.html



Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



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EDITOR'S NOTES

Editor's note

DEC 2, 2009 | [SHARE](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

I made a mistake two weeks ago in this space, and I want to correct it here.

Our recent piece on rail, which ran in the 11/18 issue, was based on original reporting by Curt Sanburn, and made a strong case for the reopening of the City's selection process for the new rail line. The *Weekly* stands behind Sanburn's story, and I regret giving the impression that we did not. Sanburn wrote exactly the story he promised and I thought he did it well.

In my editor's note that week, I expressed frustration about our internal process, and did so in a way that was inappropriate and unclear. That frustration was rooted in confusion about who was responsible for the story on our end, which led to less editorial attention to Sanburn's piece than is usually the case. That is my fault, does not reflect on Sanburn or his story, and I take full responsibility for it. I apologize to Curt and to readers for the confusion.

Mayor Mufi Hannemann's proposal to fine property owners for bulky items left improperly along Honolulu streets has provided cartoonist John Pritchett his fodder for this week (see page 3), which is funny, but the proposal is legitimately problematic.

Ask anyone who's lived in Palolo or Moiliili or along the Waianae coast and you'll get an earful about the blight—and in some cases, the danger—caused when public streets become dumping grounds for household items.

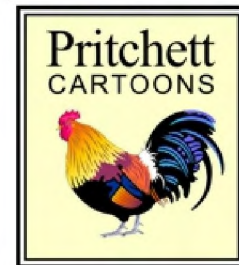
Unfortunately, the mayor's first attempt doesn't seem like a real solution. For starters, what about all the people who use the free economy as their only hope at household furniture and appliances that aren't broken? Better some of these things go to good use than straight to the landfill.

It also seems wildly unfair to see a broken couch on the side of the road and then blindly issue a citation to the owner of the nearest home. The obvious question: What if the owner didn't put it there?

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I'm reminded of a visit to Salt Lake City over a Thanksgiving weekend in the early 1990s. As a friend's father drove us slowly through the neighborhood on my first day there, he pointed to what seemed an unusually large stack of beer cans and bottles outside one particular house. Then he said, "that's the only black family on our block."

I just about choked on my tongue. I was a guest in this man's home and would have to choose my words carefully, but I had to say something. Then I noticed he was eyeing me in the rear view mirror. He continued speaking:

We have bottle and can pickup once a week. Some of the Mormon guys who sneak off and drink beer in their garages, they walk over at night and put their empties in front of this black guy's house.

Definitely some kind of pathology at work there, and I'm not suggesting that the mayor's plan would usher in a new era of bigotry in Honolulu. It just seems kind of obvious that when we face retribution for what's in our garbage, many of us simply turn and dump that garbage on our neighbors.

Maybe the City could set up no-questions-asked bulky-item drop-off spots around the island. Maybe residents could request special pick-up.

The mayor and community activists like the folks at Moiliili Matters and Makiki Talks deserve credit for getting the ball rolling on this issue. Unfortunately, the current plan doesn't sound much like a recipe for community building.

World Can't Wait Hawaii, which maintains that "the war against the Afghan people is a war crime," holds a rally today to protest President Obama's decision to send 30,000 additional U.S. soldiers there.

Prince Kuhio Federal Building, Diamond Head side, Wednesday, 12/2, 4-6pm

Musician and 'ukulele-maker Tangi Tully, who was severely beaten in an attack outside a Moiliili karaoke club last month, is now in a difficult medical situation—described by friends as a "near-vegetative state"—and unable to work. In support of Tully and his family of four, his musical 'ohana has come together for a fundraiser. Appearing at The Shack Waikiki will be Teresa Bright, Afatia Thompson, Starr Kalihiki, the Don Tiki band and Halau Ka ua Kilihine, among many others. There will be plenty of food, a raffle, a silent auction and other events.

2255 Kuhio Ave., Sun 12/6, 5-10pm, \$15 advance, \$20 at the door, [email: friendsoftangi]

—Ragnar Carlson

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Party train

Dec 2, 2009 | [SHARE](#)  

Curt Sanburn's recent article ["Railroaded," 11/18] on at-grade LRT (Light Rail Transit) mentions systems running in other cities, but fails to include the recently-opened line in Phoenix. It's a serious omission because ridership on the line is significantly above forecast, and for an unexpected reason.

Conventionally, transit systems are supposed to be used primarily by commuters, and so weekend ridership is lower than on weekdays. In January 2009, however, the Phoenix line averaged 30,600 riders on weekdays and 31,300 riders on Saturday. The latest figures for Phoenix show that weekday riders have increased to 37,000, Saturdays stay close behind at 33,000, and Sundays average 22,000 riders.

It turns out that the many at-grade easy-on, easy-off stops have made the line a popular choice for shopping expeditions and even bar-hopping. I would venture to guess that the Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor (HHCTC), if built as currently planned, will have very low ridership on Saturdays and practically none on Sundays. Do we want a transit system with a multiplicity of uses that's relatively cheap, or an expensive commuters-only system that has a slightly shorter ride time but sits idle on weekends?

Ned Conklin

Honolulu

Sidebar

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LETTERS

You first, Bob

DEC 2, 2009 | [SHARE](#) [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Editor Ragnar Carlson's apology [[Editor's note, 11/18](#)] for giving so much space to that no-elevated rail piece sounded to me like a "I had to do it because my publisher made me" plea.

If you don't want to do original reporting pieces, then don't. I'd expected better from Carlson—although he recently apologized profusely for errors in a freelancer's piece and I still think the paper owes an apology for an earlier and horribly inaccurate article on Hanalei taro "[Modifying the Debate](#)" [[Diary, 4/29](#)] by Joan Conrow.

But I ask this: Editor Ragnar Carlson, since you approved that very anti-elevated-rail piece for your cover story, may we all presume that you personally and *Honolulu Weekly* disapprove of elevated rail? It was, without question, a we-take-a-stand story. Say yes, and go with it; Or say no, and resign. Please.

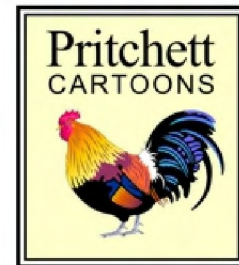
Bob Jones
Honolulu

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LETTERS

All aboard!

DEC 2, 2009 | [SHARE](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#)

It was big-hearted of the *Weekly* to allow Curt Sanburn to present his antagonistic article about the much-needed Honolulu Rail System ["Railroaded," 11/18]. I would strongly suggest that the *Weekly* allow the City to present the accurate facts on why the Rail System was selected. The *Weekly* could then maintain its reputation as a fair publication.

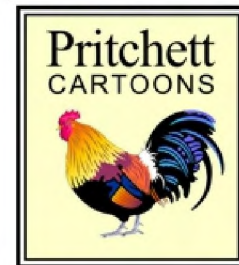
From my personal experience, the City Rail System is the right and solid way to go. I was born in Honolulu but I've worked in Menlo Park where the Cal-Train connects San Jose to San Francisco. We have had many fatal pedestrian accidents in Mountain View, Palo Alto, Menlo Park and other cities with at-grade crossings. The traffic congestion from the railroad barriers coming down to block cars and pedestrians is horrendous, and cars and pedestrians are backed up waiting for the train to pass.

Redwood City north of Menlo Park has a below-grade train crossing which runs well with no accidents or fatalities, but it would be hard and expensive to do below-grade crossings.

Honolulu should have been more progressive many years ago but better late than never. Hats off to the supporters of the rail system who recognize that now is the time!

*Suzanne Ota**Honolulu*

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Red Meat

Rail transit

Wreck of a project can still be avoided

Ben Cayetano's essay brilliantly connects the dots to reveal how ugly Hawaii's rail project already is and how much uglier it will become unless this runaway train is stopped before it crashes ("Rail system still faces many hurdles," Nov. 27).

The problems include blatant disregard for law, glaring conflicts of interest, and the triumph of hope and political ambition over evidence and experience.

Mayor Mufi continues to whistle his happy tune, but the truth is that this project is an exceedingly unhealthy cocktail of underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, undervalued environmental impacts and overvalued economic benefits.

There is still time to say no.

David T. Johnson

Kailua



December 6, 2009

Lingle must keep rail review well focused

The public needs to watch carefully as the final Environmental Impact Statement on Honolulu's planned elevated rail system arrives on Gov. Linda Lingle's desk — its last stop locally before moving on for the final federal review.

At this stage, the governor should give a careful review to the information compiled about the environmental impacts and whether concerns raised by the public have been clearly addressed. That's the scope of her job and how the process works.

What's distressing is that even before the EIS arrives — which could be months away — the rhetoric between state and city officials suggests the governor wants to go back over old ground and old issues that already have been adequately covered and reviewed by all government levels, including her own administration.

"I will not rubber-stamp the document," Lingle said in a radio interview. "It will not be a quick, couple days turnaround."

Fair enough. A mammoth document like this EIS deserves the governor's careful review.

But the governor should also avoid lengthy, pointless delays. The draft has been out for a year, and her own agencies have gone over it, submitting comments on key focus areas — transportation engineering and historic preservation among them. They've done the heavy lifting of a substantive review, and Lingle should rely on their expertise rather than start over.

The governor has also voiced her concern over the financial plan, already vetted by the Federal Transit Administration, which holds the prospect for federal funding in its hands. The plan also received thumbs-up from a local Business Roundtable panel, which was impressed by its fiscal prudence and allowances for funding and cost variations. What exactly, then, is the problem?

Lingle points to shortfalls in tax collections. However, allowances have been made for that and for changes in construction costs — which currently are expected to decrease, at least in the immediate term. And the state for years has been banking part of the tax collected to finance the rail.

The governor also has suggested that an at-grade system could more easily fit the current fiscal constraints. But there are shortcomings with this design that make it less suitable for Honolulu.

For starters, there's the lack of alternative routes to accommodate traffic displaced by the trains; the stops at intersections also would bottleneck traffic in town and bog down the train schedule, making it less efficient and driving down ridership.

All of this was covered at the city's earlier planning stage and need not be revisited by the EIS. City planners say the FTA has indicated the alternatives covered, the no-build option and variations of the airport and Salt Lake alignments, are sufficient.

There is good reason for the governor to apply due diligence to numerous environmental and cultural concerns. Just to name one: How should city builders approach Hawaiian burials sure to be unearthed? Lingle should make sure there's been the proper consultation to arrive at the best plan so that construction can go smoothly.

The entire state is in deep financial distress, and the rail project promises critical economic stimulus and jobs in the near term and a much-needed improvement in public transportation in the long run.

It should be a win-win for the city and for the state as a whole. The people elected to serve the taxpayers' interest need to keep their focus on delivering a well-planned and carefully executed improvement to Honolulu that in the end will benefit all of Hawai'i.



December 6, 2009

Long-term projects forge a better future

*By Kelcee Fujimoto
Grade 11, Mililani High School*

You may not support some of the things that the government spends our tax dollars on, but many of the expensive policies and projects that are being put into place have been planned with the purpose of preserving Hawai'i where it's needed, and improving it in places where improvement is warranted. We should not lose sight of those goals.

We are on the right track when it comes to prioritizing the state budget. We need to think about extensive, long-term problems now, as well as deal with short-term consequences of the economy.

Rail has been a controversial issue for years, but if we had been assertive and started the project decades ago when it was first proposed, we would not have the traffic problems that we do now. As Mayor Hannemann says, "The longer we delay, the more we're going to pay." And we're not only paying more monetarily, we're destroying our environment, with greenhouse gases lowering our quality of life as we sit for hours in traffic.

We need to deal with these issues now, so they don't grow to be problems that threaten Hawai'i's sustainability.

Letters to the Editor

For Sunday, December 6, 2009

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 06, 2009

No proof at-grade rail better for business

In response to Larry Geller's commentary regarding economic development along transit lines ("Street-level rail system would stimulate businesses," Star-Bulletin, Dec. 1), I know of no studies supporting the idea that the choice of any particular mode of transit determines economic winners and losers.

Market demand for goods and services is the basic economic driver supporting any business regardless of the presence of transit. Small businesses are challenged with competition, availability of credit and under-capitalization, among many factors. The presence of a fixed-transit system changes none of those.

In Denver, where the at-grade light-rail system has been running through a challenged neighborhood for more than a decade, businesses along the rail continue to struggle with challenges including the elimination of parking and access due to the train. The presence of an at-grade system at your front door does not guarantee business prosperity. The elevated system being constructed here will carry about 100,000 riders a day, more than an at-grade system, providing access to more potential consumers.

The city is examining each station area for opportunities for community-based economic development. We've been actively engaged with residents, businesses and landowners in understanding the unique circumstances of their community.

Terrance Ware

Transit-oriented development manager, city Planning and Permitting Department

Letters to the Editor

For Sunday, December 6, 2009

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 06, 2009

Rail will lessen traffic for couple

My husband and I live on the Waianae Coast and commute into Honolulu. We both strongly support rail.

At this time, the drive from our home to downtown can take anywhere from 45 minutes to two hours, depending on the traffic conditions at any one of four critical merging or congested areas. This makes planning for meetings, appointments and work very challenging. Every trip must be planned with an hour's leeway to allow for traffic conditions. We look forward to being able to plan our time more effectively and enjoy a stress-free commute by rail.

We've both experienced rail in different cities and believe it is a win-win for our community.

Dorien McClellan
Maili

December 7, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Give 'visual impact' arguments a break

Here we go again. The American Institute of Architects is putting visual impact of an elevated rail before the obvious economic, safety and efficiency benefits to riders, drivers and pedestrians.

Once upon a time, my grandparents enjoyed a panoramic view — Koko Head to Waianae — from their Hawaiian homestead in Papakolea above the city of Honolulu. But slowly, architects began building their 30-story skyscrapers with little thought or concern for the residents living on the mauka side of their buildings.

Today, who can argue that the economic interests of developing urban Honolulu were more important and the benefits greater than the cost of "visual impact"? The same arguments apply to rail. So as John Stossel would say, "Gimme a break!" And give it a break. Your arguments are too little, too late.

ALICIA MALUAFITI | Go Rail Go

December 7, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Project will improve traffic, economy

The city of Honolulu and the state of Hawaii both have a unique opportunity to be able to make a significant impact on the two most pressing concerns facing all Hawaii residents. I am speaking about Honolulu's horrendous traffic problem and the state's depressed economic situation. Once the rail project clears the final hurdles it will provide an immediate and long-lived impact to Hawaii's economy.

Coordination and cooperation are the keystone to achieving a smooth transition through the EIS with the ultimate goal of the record of decision. Now is not the time to try and reinvent the process already achieved. Clarity of purpose will be the most effective catalyst for ensuring the availability of federal funding.

JOHN BALKO | Kāneohe

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2007 Toyota Corolla (Honolulu, HI) \$12995



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Study says rail will increase pollution

Posted: Dec 08, 2009 2:30 PM

Updated: Dec 08, 2009 6:41 PM

By Jim Mendoza - [bio](#) | [email](#)

HONOLULU (HawaiiNewsNow) - A sixteen-page analysis of Honolulu's proposed rail project is new ammunition in the hands of anti-rail advocates.

It asserts that by 2030, a rail system could pump 28,000 tons of harmful pollutants into the air.

"This rail will be soot black. Definitely," traffic engineer Panos Prevedourous said.

But city managing director Kirk Caldwell said the findings are flawed and don't factor in automobiles.

"We're taking 30,000 cars off the road and they somehow say that that's not going to help on greenhouse gas emissions? It's crazy," he said.

Small Business Hawaii paid mainland company Wendell Cox Consultancy \$5,000 for the study. The company advertises itself as an international firm that specializes in urban policy and transportation.

Prevedourous said Wendell Cox is a top environmental transit analyst who used Environmental Protection Agency models for his findings.

A memo from the city called Cox a "hired gun" for the automotive and oil industries.

"For him it's all about building more roads and more highways," Caldwell said.

The study does concede that rail could control pollution during rush hour but not during off hours.

"Eighteen hours of the day it is actually a heavy, heavy polluter because there is no rider-ship," Prevedourous said.

In defense of rail Caldwell points to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

"If they use the numbers that we provided they would see that it does in fact result in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions," he said.

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[Study says rail will increase pollution](#)



Panos Prevedourous



Kirk Caldwell

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Echo 4 Items

[Admin](#)

[Adman512](#)

Wendell Cox is a pro-urban sprawl, pro petroleum, pro car & bus, pro highway paid hack. He is

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This weekend at the movies



- The Princess and the Frog
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- The Lovely Bones
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paid by all of the above to put out whatever propaganda is necessary to keep public transportation out of your city and YOU dependent on his clients. Cliff Slater, Panos Pevedorous and Sam Slom hit a new low dragging this character to Honolulu.

Passing this bunk off as "environmental" is ridiculous coming from these far right global warming deniers. It's insulting to Hawaii.

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Adman512

By 2030 we better be on renewable fuels (biodiesel).

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Sammy Dimlier

I hope folks in Honolulu have the good sense to see through Wendell Cox's anti-rail bull. He was one one of the 'thinkers' who helped sabotage efforts for rail here in Dallas and in Denver and Phoenix. Thank goodness we got tired of the BS he slings and finally got our DART rail line. Denver & Phoenix got their rail built, no thanks to him.

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December 9, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Parsons Corp. is not related to PB

The commentary "Rail system still faces many hurdles" that appeared Nov. 27 discussed the involvement of Parsons Brinckerhoff with the city's rail project. In that commentary, the repeated use of the name "Parsons" has created some confusion and inquiry. Parsons is a name often used in referring to Parsons Corp., which is not, and has never been, part of Parsons Brinckerhoff. The two corporations are entirely separate and unrelated organizations.

Parsons in its own right is an active member of the Hawaii business community with significant city, state and federal contracts.

As you can imagine, because the two companies are in the same industry, have a similar name, and are both working in Hawaii, this erroneous reference has been repeated many times and continues to create confusion for both those in the industry and the public.

To help make a distinction, people in the industry commonly refer to Parsons Brinckerhoff as "PB" and Parsons Corp. as "Parsons."

TOM McCABE | Senior VP, Parsons



December 9, 2009

Rail plan's 'green' claim disputed

*By Sean Hao
Advertiser Staff Writer*

Proponents of alternatives to rail transit yesterday released a study contending that Honolulu's planned elevated commuter rail isn't as "green" as advertised.

The report, by St. Louis-based Demographia, contends that the city's \$5.5 billion train will either slightly decrease greenhouse gas emissions or will, more likely, increase air pollution.

Those findings run counter to the city's contention that modern rail is more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly than alternatives such as elevated highway lanes.

Whether rail is more energy-efficient and reduces air pollution hinges on factors such as ridership and the fuel used to generate electricity.

According to the report, rail reduces greenhouse gas emissions only if the state massively reduces its reliance on fossil fuels used to power the train.

Demographia is run by Wendell Cox, an urban policy consultant and advocate for rail alternatives. Cox was not in Honolulu yesterday when University of Hawai'i engineering professor Panos Prevedouros presented the findings of the report at a news conference at Honolulu Hale.

The report estimated the air pollution generated by Honolulu's East Kapolei to Ala Moana rail line under various scenarios. Rail reduced air pollution only under a cost-prohibitive scenario in which the state relied on fossil fuel alternatives for 70 percent of its energy needs, according to the study.

The state currently relies on fossil fuels for most energy needs.

"They keep saying this project is green — rail is green," Prevedouros said. "Nothing could be further from the truth."

A rail alternative such as new managed highway lanes would reduce air pollution by reducing traffic congestion more than rail, Prevedouros said.

"You have to select alternatives that reduce congestion," he said. Tolloed traffic lanes "correctly done reduce traffic by 30 percent — you will get a proportionate reduction in pollution automatically."

The Demographia report cost \$5,000 and was paid for by the Small Business Hawaii Education Foundation.

City Managing Director Kirk Caldwell criticized the report as biased and insubstantial.

The city's Alternatives Analysis report released in 2006 estimated that regional emissions of greenhouse gasses would range from 0 percent to 4 percent less with the proposed rail system or an expanded bus service. That compares with a 0 percent to 4 percent increase in emissions for managed traffic lanes, according to the study by New York-based transportation engineering firm Parsons Brinckerhoff.

Even if Honolulu builds a train, traffic congestion on O'ahu will get worse. However, the city estimates that the rail system will pull about 30,000 autos off Honolulu roads in 2030.

Rail opponents "are saying that taking 30,000 cars off the road is not good for the environment," Caldwell said. "That just doesn't make common sense. That's going to have a huge, significant impact on pollution that is emitted by cars.

"The only other alternative choice would be to build more roads and highways , which are very polluting (and) they heat up the environment and only encourage even more cars."

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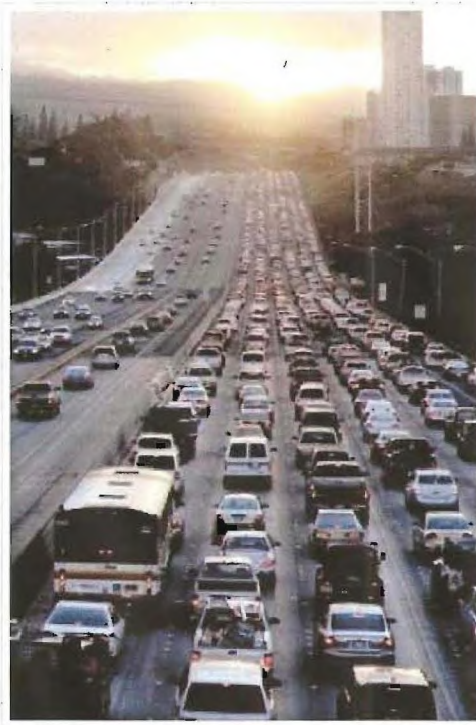
Travel and Trains and Other Things

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2009

Honolulu's Transit Opponents Have No Shame

Honolulu has had three shots at a transit system over four decades. The first two times, the project lost on 5-4 votes by the Honolulu City Council. The third time proved to be the charm when transit was approved by Honolulu voters last November.

Is transit needed on Oahu? You tell me. This shot was taken a month or so ago after a three-car accident occurred on a local freeway during afternoon rush hour.



But, as expected, the rail opponents still rant and rave.

And lie.

Yesterday, an organization called [Small Business Hawaii](#) trotted out a study that actually claims the city's transit system will be more polluting than automobiles ... a statement so easily and so often disproved as to be patently absurd. (As testimony to the depth of work going into this document, Small Business Hawaii paid the princely sum of *five thousand dollars* for it.)

Standing behind the clown who wrote this disgraceful screed was Hawaii State Senator Sam Slom, a Republican, who has also headed Small Business Hawaii for several decades. Slom, an arrogant, inflexible libertarian ideologue, is heartily detested by most people holding differing views who have ever had to deal with him.

Years ago, when Honolulu was debating transit for the second time, I briefly served on the board of directors of Small Business Hawaii.

JIM LOOMIS



Questions about train travel? You can use "comment" or email me at jimloomis3@gmail.com

About Me

JIM LOOMIS

Over the years, I've visited more than 25 countries in Europe, Asia and the Pacific. Since leaving Honolulu and retiring to Maui, I've been spending more time at my freelance writing, and much of that has been about rail travel. I'm also the author of "All Aboard! The Complete North American Train Travel Guide"; (Prima Publishing; 1st edition 1995, 2nd edition 1998).

[View my complete profile](#)

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<http://takeatrainride.blogspot.com/2009/12/honolulu-has-had-three-shots-at-transit.html>

12/9/2009

Opening the paper one morning, I read to my great surprise that SBH had come out in opposition to the city's transit project.

I immediately called Sam and asked how a policy decision like that could be made without board approval. "It's my prerogative," Sam said. "Well," I replied, "if that's the way decisions are made, I may have to reconsider my participation as a board member." "I'll have a membership refund check in the mail to you this afternoon," Sam snapped. And he hung up.

That's who is behind this absurd, embarrassing, insulting, biased, half-baked, fraudulent "study."

But what's *truly* shocking is that the Honolulu media actually bought it ... at least to the extent that they gave it equal play on the TV news last night. No skepticism, no questions, no checking the credentials of the guy who prepared it.

Somewhere, Walter Cronkite is spinning in his grave like a goddam top!

Posted by JIM LOOMIS at 11:32 AM

Labels: Hawaii, Honolulu City Council, Honolulu transit, Oahu, Sam Slom, Small Business Hawaii

1 comments:

Don said...

Preach on! I am so very frustrated that Honolulu's rail, which has been blessed by the friggin' Sierra Club fergawdsakes, would get bashed like this and none of the media push back on this "study" and its sponsors.

December 9, 2009 1:29 PM

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On the right track (Honolulu Weekly)

Dec 9, 2009 | 

Edward Smith was right with his letter in the *Weekly* ("[Rail shibai](#)," 11/25). Our city has been toying and hand-wringing over this rail project for three decades! As with all big projects in Honolulu, the debate devolves into political posturing, cronyism and corrupt politicians trying to manipulate the process for their own selfish power grabs.

Let's break ground, get this elevated-rail system built and stop tolerating political roadblocks.

We need to get people out of the traffic flow and off the roads. Our people-movement problems are not going to be solved by trains using roads shared with cars.

I lived in Miami for years and worked near the elevated rail system. Compared to freeway ramps and overpasses, the elevated rail was quiet, clean and, with a park bike path and landscaping underneath, aesthetically far superior than any other elevated roadway proposed in Hawaii. Best of all, the elevated train sped past bumper to bumper fume-laden freeway traffic every day, every time and saved me hours in commute time. Enough talk, enough of the studies, enough whining. We voted last year to build it! Break ground and let's get moving.

Jeff Merz

Waikiki Neighborhood Board

Representative

On the right track

Dec 9, 2009 | 

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Jeff Merz

Waikiki Neighborhood Board

Representative



Letters to the Editor

For Wednesday, December 9, 2009

Rail good for growth and employment

The city is poised to start groundbreaking on a project that will help shape our island for years to come. The rail project will help direct growth and allow residents an alternative to traveling by car. It also will connect Kapolei to downtown Honolulu, which will be our two major employment centers. More important, rail will create thousands of new jobs. With our state's unemployment rate at 7.2 percent, the highest it's been in three decades, people need these jobs to survive.

It is important that our governor accept the rail environmental impact statement to allow this project to move forward. Time is of the essence and I hope Gov. Linda Lingle is listening.

Tim Braunschweig
Honolulu

Pollution from rail feared

[By B.J. Reyes](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 09, 2009

The city's proposed \$5.3 billion rail system could increase greenhouse gas emissions in Hawaii by as much as 28,000 tons by 2030, according to a study commissioned by rail opponents.

City officials criticized the report as a last-ditch effort to sabotage the project, which aims to break ground by the end of next month.

"It's a little bit like hearing that the Grinch is analyzing Christmas," said Kirk Caldwell, city managing director. "This, I believe, is a last-minute effort to try to derail rail. They basically are saying that taking 30,000 cars off the road is somehow bad for the environment. It doesn't make sense."

The report, "The Honolulu Rail Line Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation," was commissioned by the Small Business Hawaii Education Foundation, a nonprofit research arm of Smart Business Hawaii, a trade group that opposes rail.

Sen. Sam Slom (R, Diamond Head-Hawaii Kai), president of Smart Business Hawaii, formerly Small Business Hawaii, said the research group spent \$5,000 to have mainland consultant Wendell Cox perform the analysis based on the project's draft environmental impact statement. Cox has consulted for the U.S. Department of Transportation as well as for public agencies in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Under a worst-case scenario, Honolulu's greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 would be about 1.36 million tons annually with the rail system, an increase of about 28,000 tons compared with emissions without rail, according to the study.

The worst-case scenario assumes a more gradual decline in the use of fossil fuels for transportation.

In the best-case scenario, in which 70 percent of Hawaii's energy is derived from renewable sources by 2030, greenhouse gas emissions would decrease 12,000 tons by 2030, the study said.

"In the best case, rail would marginally reduce greenhouse gas emissions at an extremely high

cost per ton," the study said. "As a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the Honolulu rail line is exorbitantly expensive."

Slom presented the study yesterday at the steps of City Hall along with Panos Prevedouros, a University of Hawaii transportation engineering professor who unsuccessfully challenged Mayor Mufi Hannemann in the 2008 election.

Both contend that the draft impact statement for the rail does not address concern over greenhouse gas emissions and their impact on climate change.

Caldwell said the city has complied with a request from the Environmental Protection Agency that an emissions analysis be included in the final environmental impact statement, which is being reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration.

Source: Maui Time Weekly

Coconut Wireless Hawaii DLNR Damages Reef in Ironic Fashion and Gov. Lingle Sees the EIS Light

by Jacob Shafer

December 10, 2009

HYPER LOCAL

Irony of the tragic kind struck last week, when the state Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) damaged a section of reef at Keawakapu in South Maui. The irony part comes in because DLNR did the damage while sinking large hunks of concrete meant to serve as an artificial reef habitat. In a December 3 release, the department says it has “suspended deployment of artificial reef forms while it investigates the extent of the inadvertent damage that may have been caused...” Imagine if a private company had done something like this. Or don’t imagine—just think back to 2006, when a Maui Dive Shop boat destroyed a section of reef at Molokini and was later slapped with a \$550,00 fine and had its commercial use permit suspended by the DLNR board. In light of that, it’ll be interesting to see what comes of DLNR’s internal investigation (those things tend to be like roads on the moon: they sound impressive but lead nowhere). For now what’s clear is that this was, at best, a case of gross, counterproductive negligence.... Ah, earmarks—always good for a little campaign-season controversy. The latest example: a \$3.5 million allotment requested by Rep. Neil Abercrombie for Kahului-based Pacific Biodiesel, to grow alternative energy crops like sunflower and canola on Army land. Sounds innocent enough, but the fact that Pacific Biodiesel co-owner Kelly King is connected to Abercrombie’s gubernatorial campaign muddies the water. Abercrombie spokesman Randy Obata told the Honolulu Advertiser that King is a voluntary co-chair who isn’t intimately involved in the campaign, and that to suggest unfair favoritism is “to make a connection that really isn’t there.” In the same story, King said she first lobbied for the funding before Abercrombie announced his candidacy. The whole thing may well be more molehill than mountain. But if King really did ask for Abercrombie’s help before he threw his hat in the ring, and if her involvement in the campaign really is mostly symbolic, the wise course would have been to never become a “voluntary co-chair.” Generally best to avoid even the appearance of impropriety, especially when \$3.5 million is on the line....

LOCAL

I read with interest the transcript of Gov. Lingle’s December 3 radio address, in which she discussed the Honolulu rail project and the recently completed Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). To quote directly: “I have the obligation to conduct a thorough objective review of the EIS. Among the things I will review are whether all construction and design alternatives were sufficiently reviewed and whether or not the financial plan is feasible.... I take this obligation very seriously and I will not simply ‘rubber stamp’ the document. When I do receive the final EIS, I will

take an appropriate amount of time to review it to ensure all the people of Hawaii will be well-served by this project now and in the future.” Sounds reasonable. After all, what kind of idiot would launch a major transportation venture without making sure it was both logistically and financially sound?... Interesting item in the December 4 Advertiser about how gun ownership in Hawaii has shot up in the early part of this century. In 2000, there were 13,600 guns registered in the state; last year, there were almost 26,000. And experts expect the number to rise even more, as Obama strikes fear into the hearts of firearm enthusiasts who believe they’d better buy ‘em now before he takes ‘em away. Here’s the most telling quote, from Harry Gerwig II, president of the Hawaii Rifle Association: “When people don’t feel confident about the direction the country is going, they look for another way to up their confidence level.” Funny thing, that statement makes me feel less confident about the direction the country is going. So...should I should buy a gun?...

NOT LOCAL

The focus with both the Iraq withdrawal and the Afghanistan escalation has been on the number of U.S. troops in each country. But it’s important to remember they aren’t the only ones over there. According to Defense Department figures, as of September 30 there were 11,162 “armed private security contractor personnel” in Iraq, and another 10,712 in Afghanistan. Although our tax dollars are funding those men and women, they’re not part of our military, and thus not part of any exit strategy Obama has discussed. Most important, and disturbing, is the question of who, exactly, they’re serving.... As the latest attempt to reform health care in America crawls bludgeoned and babbling toward the finish line, the latest issue of Harper’s magazine offers one of the most incisive—and therefore depressing—critiques of the issue to date. The piece, by senior editor Luke Mitchell, convincingly casts the Democrats as stooges for the drug and insurance companies and the Republicans as jilted second fiddles, reduced to shouting incoherent platitudes from the sidelines. The concluding line is the gut punch: “It is difficult to imagine anything good coming from a system that moderates the will of corporations with the fantasies of hysterics.” *MauiTime*, Jacob Shafer

Letters to the Editor

For Thursday, December 10, 2009

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 10, 2009

China rail lines forging ahead

During a tour to eastern China that included the Shanghai-Nanjing-Suzhou-Hangzhou area, we noted the concrete pylons being erected for an elevated 1,116-mile rail line from Shanghai to Beijing, and a 186-mile line from Shanghai to Hangzhou.

The 1,116-mile line will be completed in four years. How far along will Honolulu's be in four years? Our guide said that China had installed a 18.6-mile demonstration Maglev (magnetic levitation) system in Shanghai but abandoned further expansion because of the noise and fear of radiation. Thankfully that wasn't adopted for the Honolulu line.

Ronald Wong
Honolulu

Letters to the Editor

For Thursday, December 10, 2009

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 10, 2009

Overhead rail only way to go

Why are we still having this no-brainer argument about the rail system being at-grade or an overhead system? Why can't these people grasp these simple truths — that there is no room to accommodate both a rail system and a roadway? If you have an at-grade system every time the train comes to a crossing, all traffic will stop at the crossing and back up for miles.

The overhead system will eliminate any potential problems that are on the ground. How about accidents at the crossings? Why do people keep going back to square one concerning the debate about rail?

An overhead system was picked because there are no other alternatives.

Steve Curty
Honolulu



December 11, 2009

Road relief coming to 'Ewa

Fort Weaver widened and Kapolei Parkway connection in final stages

*By Gordon Y.K. Pang
Advertiser Staff Writer*

'Ewa Beach and 'Ewa motorists will get a little more traffic relief when the long-awaited connection between Kapolei Parkway and North-South Road opens at the end of January or early February.

The connection would allow motorists an alternative path to H-1 Freeway via the new North-South Road interchange. They would travel along Kapolei Parkway through Ocean Pointe and 'Ewa By Gentry, continue north along North-South Road through 'Ewa Villages, and then into a section of Kapolei and Farrington Highway.

What's to open next year is a 0.7-mile segment of Kapolei Parkway in 'Ewa Villages that will connect 'Ewa with Kapolei, and the second segment of the state's North-South Road between Farrington Highway and Kapolei Parkway, state Transportation Director Brennon Morioka said yesterday.

In the past, frustrated early-morning 'Ewa Beach motorists stuck on Fort Weaver Road have been known to travel west into Kapolei to get on to the freeway to head back east into Honolulu.

But besides having a new route onto the freeway, "people will be able to travel on Kapolei Parkway (from 'Ewa) all the way into the heart of Kapolei," Morioka said. The northwestern segment of Kapolei Parkway now stretches as far as Fort Barrette Road. Eventually, Kapolei Parkway will connect all the way to Ko Olina.

Morioka made the announcement about the Kapolei Parkway-North-South Road connection as he and other officials formally opened the widened Fort Weaver Road yesterday.

Because the state has been opening up segments of the expanded road as they are completed, 'Ewa and 'Ewa Beach residents have been reaping the benefits of an additional lane in each direction over the past year.

DOT officials said 'Ewa Beach residents report shaving as much as 15 to 20 minutes off their peak-hour commutes.

Diane Reece, director of properties for the nonprofit Child & Family Services, which sits along Fort Weaver Road, said the Fort Weaver widening has made a huge difference for visitors to the center's parking lot.

"Before, it didn't matter what time of day you were trying to get in or out, you'd be stuck in traffic," Reece said. "Now, the cars are traveling down (Fort Weaver) with such speed that we have to wait for the red light to come on."

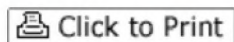
The two-mile stretch of Fort Weaver blessed yesterday, billed as Phase 2 of the Fort Weaver Widening Project, runs from 'A'awa Drive south to Geiger Road.

Built at just under \$60 million, 80 percent from federal funding, the project had been beset by delays and complaints. Even state transportation officials and contractor Hawaiian Dredging Co. joked about

the frustrations yesterday.

But even as the dedication was taking place at the Renton Road intersection, work was still being done on the Geiger area.

DOT spokeswoman Tammy Mori said a few isolated "punch list" items remain and are expected to be done in the coming weeks.



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THEBUZZ

Convention center wins award 2 years running

By [Erika Engle](#)

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 11, 2009

The Hawai'i Convention Center is 2-for-2.

In only the second year of Business Traveler Magazine's 2010 Best in Business Travel award in the category of Best Conference or Convention Center: City, the Hawai'i Convention Center has won -- again -- [as it did last year](#).

The win "was based on a survey of business travelers," said Joe Davis, general manager of the center, managed and marketed by SMG for the Hawaii Tourism Authority.

The magazine's 10 editions reach more than 500,000 readers worldwide.

It mailed surveys to 2,000 randomly selected print-edition subscribers and e-mailed surveys to 2,000 digital subscribers. The survey asked open-ended questions with no nominees or suggested names or choices.

[Business Traveler Magazine](#) is "the best publication of its kind anywhere," Davis said. Its 10 international editions mean "the global exposure is really good for us, and I think the award is a testament to what we're doing right -- not just the service delivery by our team, but the amount of productivity business travelers get when they decide to come."

Hawaii made a big splash on the business travel map recently when President Barack Obama chose the state to host the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings.

Davis was unable to go to last night's gala in Los Angeles because of a schedule conflict involving an HTA meeting.

Hence, Teddi Anderson, president of The Limtiaco Co., which handles public relations for the center, went to accept the award on its behalf.

Whoever posts Business Traveler's tweets on Twitter.com, believed to be Editor-in-Chief Eva Leonard, posted about being en route to the festivities:

"Using Gogo Wi-Fi aboard United's NY-LA p.s. service. On the way to Business Traveler's Best in Business Travel Awards at Sofitel LA. EL"

The Twitter user named [@businesstravelr](#) then plugged the now-available issue containing all the winners:

"Business Traveler's 2009 Best in Business Travel Awards winners in Dec/Jan issue + cover story on 'Up in the Air' starring George Clooney."

While one could potentially accuse the magazine of merely trying to boost circulation by putting George Clooney on its cover, his presence reflects his role as a business traveler who fires people for a living in the upcoming movie.

Who'll be working on the railroad?

Possible rail transit project opportunities for Hawaii contractors will be presented by the Bombardier Transit Team from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday at Sam Choy's Breakfast Lunch & Crab at 580 N. Nimitz Highway.

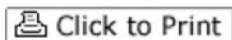
The team plans to submit a proposal for the Core Systems Design-Build-Operate-Maintain contract for Honolulu Rail Transit and will discuss opportunities for companies involved in engineering and design, communication and data systems, rigging, mechanical and electrical assembly and more.

Reservations are recommended and can be made to Wally Zimmermann at Bright Light Marketing Group at 275-3001 or via e-mail at wally@brightlightmarketing.com.

Erika Engle is a reporter with the Star-Bulletin. Reach her by e-mail at erika@starbulletin.com.

Find this article at:

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December 12, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Rail transit

Looking forward to stress-free commute

My husband and I live on the Waianae Coast and commute into Honolulu. We both strongly support rail.

At this time, the drive from our home to downtown can take anywhere from 45 minutes to 2 hours, depending on the traffic conditions at any one of four critical merging or congested areas. This makes planning for meetings, appointments and work very challenging: every trip must be planned with an hour's leeway to allow for traffic conditions. We look forward to being able to plan our time more effectively and enjoy a stress-free commute by rail.

We've both experienced rail in different cities and believe it is a win-win for our community.

DORIEN SMITH McCLELLAN | Māili

December 12, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Rail transit

Project team is in no way out of touch

Scott Wilson's letter to the editor stated that the City's transit team is "out of touch with current developments in rail transit." I am one of many City transit team members. I've been a project manager on three recent light rail systems that Mr. Wilson claims are more advanced than the Honolulu system. I sit on the industry association's Light Rail Technical Forum and on its Automated Transit Task Force. I don't believe I am "out of touch" with current developments nor do I believe are any of my senior colleagues on this Project, many of whom have similar credentials.

Since the planned system for Honolulu is a fully automated transit system, most of us in this industry would consider it to embody a more advanced technology than the light rail system that Mr. Wilson advocates. I believe that surface light rail has its appropriate applications, but after considerable study, the City's technical team and its consultants recommended that automated rail would be the most suitable application for this particular corridor and travel characteristics.

By the way, in nearly three years of working on this project, I can categorically state that I have never been told to make any specific recommendation on technology or any other matter pertaining to this project.

SIMON ZWEIGHAFT | Managing consultant, InfraConsult

Letters to the Editor

For Saturday, December 12, 2009

Greenhouse gas not part of EIS

How seriously are we supposed to take a rail study from people who don't know the environmental review process? Panos Prevedouros criticized the rail draft environmental impact statement because it didn't include information on greenhouse gases ("Pollution from rail feared," Star-Bulletin, Dec. 9). Neither federal nor state law currently requires a transportation environmental impact statement to study greenhouse gases.

Panos is either playing dumb or he doesn't know the law. Neither is acceptable from someone who professes to be a transit expert.

Jerry Sakayanan
Waipahu

Letters to the Editor

For Saturday, December 12, 2009

Maglev superior to steel wheel rail

The Star-Bulletin should not have published Ronald Wong's letter without a factual check ("China rail lines forging ahead," Letters, Dec. 10). He is thankful that Honolulu abandoned magnetic levitation because of noise and fear of radiation. He is obviously not aware that the HSST urban Maglev has no radiation concerns and would, in fact, be much quieter than any steel wheel on steel rail system.

The city purposely avoided noise comparisons with the Maglev when it issued its "disinformation" circular prior to the November 2008 election because the administration knew that even noise-mitigated (i.e., sidewalls on the guideway) steel wheels would still be twice as loud as unmitigated Maglev.

The HSST (or Linimo as it is known in Japan), vis-a-vis steel-on-steel, also is faster, more reliable and safer, and its operations and maintenance costs would be 20-30 percent less per year.

Its guideway would be much less imposing physically and would cost about 20 percent less than the steel wheels "bridge" to construct. That would be enough to extend the system to UH-Manoa and into Waikiki within the current system's budget and timelines. The city's rush to steel -- without an open competition among all qualified systems -- will eventually leave us with an inferior system at a higher cost.

Frank Genadio
Kapolei

December 13, 2009

Honolulu mayor to discuss rail in D.C.

Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann will be in Washington, D.C., tomorrow to meet with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and other federal officials about Honolulu's rail transit project, city spokesman Bill Brennan said.

The mayor will also attend a White House holiday reception hosted by President Obama.

Hannemann will return to Honolulu on Tuesday, Brennan said.



December 13, 2009

Kiewit offered city 'best value'

*By Sean Hao
Advertiser Staff Writer*

Competition for the biggest contract yet on Honolulu's planned \$5.5 billion rail transit project apparently wasn't even close.

The city awarded Kiewit Pacific Co. the nearly \$483 million deal in late October based on an evaluation of a five-member panel. Kiewit's bid was \$23.8 million less than that of competitor Flatiron/SNC-Lavalin/Ledcor LLC, according to evaluation committee scoring sheets obtained by The Advertiser via the Freedom of Information Act.

However, Kiewit's proposal was deemed superior to the Flatiron proposal and another bid, \$588 million by Nordic PCL/Hawaiian Dredging, on nearly all criteria, including cost. Under terms of the city's request for proposals, the contract was awarded to the bidder deemed to provide the "best value" to the city rather than the one with the lowest-cost bid.

The contract covers design and construction of the first 6 1/2 miles of the 20-mile project. The first phase will run from Kapolei to Pearl Highlands near Leeward Community College.

Kiewit's bid was the lowest and generally scored higher than competitors among evaluation committee members on criteria such as management approach, personnel experience, technical solutions, schedule, price realism and project support.

The "best value" criteria is meant to ensure that the city not only gets a good price, but that the price is realistic and that the contractor has the ability to complete the project, said city Transportation Director Wayne Yoshioka.

"We really want them to do a good job, and we want them to do it right," he said. "We don't want them to cut any corners."

The committee that evaluated the proposals comprised three city employees and two employees of project management oversight consultant InfraConsult. Kiewit's proposal garnered the most points — 8,607 — followed by Nordic PCL/Hawaiian Dredging (7,495 points) and the Flatiron consortium (7,222 points), according to the committee's scoring sheets.

The city Department of Transportation Services is withholding the minutes of evaluation committee meetings from public disclosure. The Advertiser is appealing that decision with the state Office of Information Practices.

Yoshioka, who wasn't on the evaluation committee, said Kiewit's proposal was strong in all areas.

"It's just coincidental and very fortunate that they were also the lowest (bidder)," he said. "We're very happy that things did turn out the way they did, and that the costs came in so much lower than we expected."

City officials had estimated that construction of the first guideway segment would cost \$500 million to \$600 million.

Under terms of the city's bid solicitation, the two losing teams that were finalists for the construction contract are eligible for up to \$500,000 to offset the costs of bidding on the project. The stipend was meant to foster competition.

The two other teams that were eliminated from contention for the contract early on were the Shimmick, Obayashi, Goodfellow Bro-thers Joint Venture and the Perini/Parsons HLR Joint Venture.

December 13, 2009

Letter to the Editor

Rail transit

Focus on the best system for people

Last Sunday's editorial came across as somewhat dictatorial. It called for Gov. Lingle to be well focused. By blindly approving the city's rail plan?

The governor's not ignorant about rail and its draft environmental impact statement, as the mayor would like everyone to believe. The DEIS is over a year old, yet its myriad problems and shortcomings identified by concerned organizations and community groups have not been addressed.

The editorial noted Lingle has voiced her concern on the financial plan, and rightly so. It added that the FTA holds the prospect of federal funding in its hands, but overlooked the fact that Hawaii citizens and property owners will have to shoulder the colossal financial burden when federal money and GET tax collections likely fall well short of funding the mayor's pipe dream. Transit construction must not begin until the FTA has clearly committed construction funds, which won't be known until 2011 or later.

Voters must become educated on the huge mistake of proceeding with this over-built and excessively costly elevated system, and on the need for evaluating realistic, affordable alternatives virtually ignored in the DEIS.

The editorial stated: "The people elected to serve the taxpayers' interest need to keep their focus on delivering a well-planned and carefully executed improvement to Honolulu that in the end will benefit all of Hawaii." That's exactly what we want, with a far more flexible, convenient and affordable integrated at-grade transit system.

Michelle Spalding Matson | Honolulu Scott Wilson

AIA

Reg White

Honolulu

Robert Crone

AIA

Gerald Chang

Moiiliili

Peter Vincent

AIA

George Fox

Advocates for Consumer Rights

Nancy L. Hedlund

Honolulu



December 14, 2009

Council must clear way for transit agency

The City Council has another chance to do what it failed to do more than a year ago: Take the first step toward placing the management of the city's rail project in the hands of the best equipped professionals.

That would be the creation of a transit authority, part of city governance but insulated from the politics of those in elective office. It's a semi-autonomous agency that would have to be established through a City Charter amendment, a change in the city's governing document that would go before voters in the 2010 elections.

A similar proposal came before the council before the last elections, a proposal by Mayor Mufi Hannemann. It fell short then, but fortunately, the tide has changed and the current council now seems open to what's called Bill 251, CD1. Under the City Charter, the council is empowered to propose amendments periodically, and 2010 is the council's year.

Wednesday it comes up for a final vote and deserves to pass.

Among its key components:

- The authority would comprise a policy-making board of directors, an executive director the board would hire, and supporting staff. The board composition is balanced: three to be named by the council, three by the mayor, one by the city transportation services director, one by the state transportation director and a ninth to be chosen collectively. With the city's planning director as a non-voting member, the group will have the connections it needs to coordinate the development of the project.
- The authority would have the power of eminent domain, to condemn property needed for the rail alignment. However, the council could intervene to block the condemnation if it acts within 45 days of receiving notice of condemnation. This allows oversight that may be needed for unforeseen conflicts, but the time limits should ensure that interruptions will be rare.
- It would have broad powers over construction and operation, including making and execute contracts, establish fares, direct the planning, design and construction and assist with transit-oriented development.

The council would be wise to enable the delegation of such critical duties to a board with expertise, rather than to a body that has members up for election every two years.

That's a disruption that would cripple a complex and expensive undertaking such as transit development. Let's see that Honolulu's largest public works project has every chance at success.

December 14, 2009

Hawaii's Rep. Abercrombie says he'll resign seat after key votes

Congressman says lack of leadership in state drove decision

By *DERRICK DePLEDGE*
Advertiser Government Writer

U.S. Rep. Neil Abercrombie said yesterday that a collapse of leadership in Hawai'i has motivated him to resign from Congress and return in a matter of weeks to campaign full time for governor.

The Hawai'i Democrat, speaking at a news conference at his campaign headquarters at Ward Warehouse, would not give a specific date for his resignation because of the uncertain timing of key votes in Congress.

Abercrombie said he would remain in Congress for expected votes on health care reform, a Native Hawaiian federal recognition bill and other federal legislation important to the Islands.

But Abercrombie, who has served two decades in Congress, said he would likely resign in a matter of weeks, not months.

A special election will be held to fill the remaining months of his two-year term, which ends in January 2011.

"We need to have leadership. There's been a total collapse of leadership in the state," Abercrombie said. "There's a lack of confidence in what's taking place in the state."

The congressman cited the controversy over teacher furloughs at public schools as an example of failed leadership. He has urged the Lingle administration, state House and Senate leaders and the Hawaii State Teachers Association to eliminate furloughs and restore classroom instruction time for students.

Abercrombie also reached out to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, who criticized teacher furloughs in Hawai'i and suggested the state may miss out on federal Race to the Top grants as a result.

Talks between the Lingle administration and the teachers' union have been at a stalemate, but are scheduled to resume this week.

"That issue needs to be resolved," Abercrombie said. "You cannot have a situation in which instructional days of children are being lost. They can never be regained."

commit to race now

Abercrombie also cited budget cuts at the state Office of Elections — which could influence the timing of a special election and preparations for the primary and general election — as a leadership problem.

"Right now, special elections are a blip on the screen. So far as I'm able to understand, the Office of Elections is unprepared for any election," he said.

Abercrombie's resignation would allow him to focus on his campaign and a likely Democratic primary challenge from Honolulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann.

Hannemann's advisers have said Abercrombie's resignation, and the loss of his seniority in Congress, could leave Hawai'i vulnerable at a time when the state is looking to the federal government for money for a Honolulu rail project and help with other issues.

Asked yesterday about Hannemann's criticism, Abercrombie brushed it off, saying: "The mayor is not a candidate for office, so far as I know, other than dealing with the circumstances of his office to which he's been elected.

"So I suggest if there's issues to be dealt with at the city that the mayor address those."

In his remarks at the news conference, Abercrombie said anyone considering a run for governor next year should commit completely to the campaign now, which appeared to be a challenge to Hannemann, who has been raising money and collecting endorsements but has not formally declared.

But Abercrombie told reporters afterward that he was not urging Hannemann to declare for governor and resign as mayor. The mayor has until the filing deadline next July to formally announce his intentions.

Lt. Gov. James "Duke" Aiona, a Republican candidate for governor, has said he does not plan to resign to campaign.

gop slams strategy

Other Republicans questioned whether Abercrombie's resignation was simply a tactical move against Hannemann.

"Representative Neil Abercrombie is as wavering with his resignation as he is with his commitment to Hawai'i," Jonah Ka'auwai, the state GOP chairman, said in a statement yesterday. "He made no announcement of a date of resignation and had no real thoughts on the burden the special election to replace him will put on Hawai'i's taxpayers or the dismantled Office of Elections. Can we expect this kind of indecisive leadership from someone who is seeking the highest office of Hawai'i?"

"His announcement Friday received tremendous backlash and confusion among Hawai'i voters, who deserve so much more than this typical political nonsense. He claims he's 'all in' with the people of Hawai'i and wants to campaign full time but there's little doubt the good people of Hawai'i will see through him," Ka'auwai said. "Hawai'i is tired of publicity stunts and political shenanigans. Voters want real leadership, real change, and it is clear that many of the politicians in the Democrat Party cannot offer anything but the same things we've seen for the last 50 years."

Amy Agbayani, director of the University of Hawai'i-Mānoa Office of Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity, said that campaigning full time will allow Abercrombie to put the issues facing Hawai'i into context.

"I think we need this focus and for him to be more personal, for people to feel he is accessible," said Agbayani, a volunteer on the congressman's campaign.

Former Congressman Ed Case, state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa, and Honolulu City Councilman Charles Djou have said they will run in a special election to fill out Abercrombie's term, and in the primary and general election to replace him in Congress.

The state Office of Elections, citing budget constraints, has raised doubt about whether a special election can be held before the September primary.

State lawmakers, concerned about leaving Hawai'i without full representation in Congress, would likely search for state or federal money to help finance a special election.



December 14, 2009

Honolulu rail project gets additional \$30M in federal funding

Honolulu's rail transit project will receive \$30 million in federal funding included under an omnibus spending package approved by Congress over the weekend.

The funding was included in a consolidated appropriations bill. Hawai'i is expected to receive more than \$387 million in total through the package, for a wide variety of projects and programs. Overall the city expect to get \$1.55 billion in federal grants to pay for the planned \$5.5 billion, 20-mile rail. The \$30 million in added funding brings Honolulu's total federal take to \$69 million so far.

December 14, 2009

Mililani High School seniors take first place in City's 'Youth For Rail' art contest

*Honolulu Rail Transit Project
Reader Submitted*

Mililani High School seniors Edward Birtodaso, Chelsie Mangca-Valdez and Brennan Mata were recently named the winners of the City & County of Honolulu's "Youth For Rail" Art Contest.

The art competition, held earlier this fall, was meant to educate students and encourage youth participation in the Honolulu rail transit project. More than 100 students from high schools across Oahu showcased their talents in the art contest.

The student competition was split into two categories: (1) an art contest that involved individual contestants, and (2) an advertising contest that involved student teams. Birtodaso won for the art category, while Mangca-Valdez and Mata won the advertising category. Birtodaso was also named the overall contest winner and received a donated iPod Touch.

"These students have displayed their artistic talents in explaining how rail will benefit their generation and others to come," Mayor Mufi Hannemann said. "These future users of rail transit will benefit the most from a system that will provide safe, reliable transportation, improve our economy, make us more energy-efficient, protect our environment, and enhance our quality of life."

All the student winners will participate in a transportation-related field trip in January or February, where they will learn more about mass transit and traffic in Honolulu, including TheBus, the Honolulu Traffic Management Center, the Honolulu rail transit project, and bicycle paths.

Plans are being made to display the artwork entries by all contestants at public venues. To view all contest art submissions, visit the student gallery at the website www.MovingUsForward.org or the "Youth Council on Rail" Facebook page, where students can also engage in online forums discussing the merits of rail transit.

Train service for the first leg of the rail transit route between East Kapolei and Pearl City is scheduled to begin in 2012, with full service along the entire 20-mile route from East Kapolei to Ala Moana in 2019.

Honolulu Rail Project to Receive \$30 Million

Last Update: 10:20 am

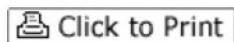
Mayor Mufi Hannemann today expressed his appreciation to Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye, Senator Daniel Akaka and Hawaii's congressional delegation for ensuring that Honolulu's rail transit project will receive \$30 million included in an omnibus spending package.

"Once again, the leader of Hawaii's congressional delegation has come through for us," Hannemann said. "Senator Inouye's outstanding leadership has been instrumental in moving forward this rail transit project that is vital to our island's economy and its future."

The money will help pay for preliminary engineering and design of the transit system.

The funding was included in a consolidated appropriations bill. Hawaii will receive more than \$387 million in total through the package, for a wide variety of projects and programs.





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Senate money bill includes \$387 million for Hawaii

Honolulu's rail transit system will receive \$30 million under the measure

POSTED: 02:33 p.m. HST, Dec 13, 2009

Hawaii stands to gain more than \$387 million for a myriad of projects affecting schools, roads, rail transit and other initiatives under a spending bill passed today by the U.S. Senate.

U.S. Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said the money will also supports scientific research, environmental protection and law enforcement operations.

"This much-needed infusion of federal capital will help push construction projects toward completion and create much-needed jobs," Inouye said in an announcement today. "Our local economy needs all the assistance it can get."

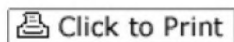
The appropriation, passed 57-35 with Inouye and Sen. Daniel Akaka voting in favor, now goes to President Barack Obama for his signature.

Among the Hawaii projects and programs benefiting are:

- >> \$30 million for the proposed Honolulu rail transit project.
- >> \$3.4 million for buses on the neighbor islands.
- >> \$34 million for native Hawaiian education.
- >> \$13 million for native Hawaiian block grants.
- >> \$14 million for native Hawaiian health care.
- >> \$1.5 million for the state Department of Education.

Find this article at:

<http://www.starbulletin.com/news/breaking/79179522.html>



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December 16, 2009

Letter to the Editor

Rail transit

System will benefit public in 3 big ways

Rail comes down to three critical issues. First, improving traffic. Second, creating jobs for local folks. Third, creating a better Oahu for our children.

If you agree with any of these three points, the decision is easy. Just sign the EIS, Gov. Lingle. It's the easiest decision you will make and one that truly benefits the public.

KEALII FLOOD | Kailua

December 17, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Rail Transit

Poll results show public support rose

We find it interesting that The Advertiser's story about a scientific poll on rail authorized by the city ("Poll, TV deals avoid scrutiny," Dec. 11) neglected to include the most obvious thing: the poll results.

When Advertiser reporter Sean Hao requested information on the city's recent poll, he was also provided the results of the scientific survey that found:

- 60 percent of those polled supported the development of a 20-mile elevated rail transit line connecting West Oahu with Downtown Honolulu and Ala Moana Center.
- 69 percent also felt that rail transit was a "good investment" in the future of Honolulu.
- 77 percent of Oahu feels the island has a "serious" traffic problem. And even among those opposing the rail project, 71 percent agrees that Oahu has serious traffic problems.

The scientific survey conducted by respected polling firm QMark Research & Polling interviewed 900 Oahu residents. One hundred people in each of the nine City Council districts were interviewed to ensure that all regions of the island were surveyed.

Not only did the poll show that public support for rail went up since the transit vote, but it provides the city insight on how to improve its community outreach on what the public wants to learn about the project, including costs and how the train service would operate.

KIRK CALDWELL | Managing director, City and County of Honolulu

December 22, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Rail transit

Let's proceed for a healthier Hawaii

Critics of our rail system project such as ex-governor Ben Cayetano and David T. Johnston of Kailua are going berserk in trying to wreck our hope for a better transportation in the future.

Oahu voters approved the project and there should not be moaning, whining and crying.

People of Oahu know what is good for their health and comfort, financial and safety securities. Add years of longevity because air we breathe will be free from carbon dioxide; bicycle lanes may also be built.

We might build an H-1 lane or any of our wider roads for bicycles alone. These "vehicles" are not \$30,000, but less than \$300, with no gas to expenses.

In short we would not spend tons of money for cars, gas, medical expenses, insurance, car repair bills, etc.

So let us proceed with our rail project with confidence and bring back paradise to our beautiful island of Oahu.

Bernardo P. Benigmo | Mililani



SEASON'S GREETINGS!
DECEMBER 22 THRU JANUARY 3
HAWAII THEATRE

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Editor's note

RAGNAR CARLSON

DEC 23, 2009 |

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(R)ode to joy: On the cover and again here, Jianca Lazarus captures the elation in Taj Burrow after he won this month's Pipeline Masters. We'll have what he's having.

IMAGE: JIANCA LAZARUS

It's a good time of year for good news, and this week we've made an effort to highlight a couple of things that are going right around here. Our cover story this week features good news from the public sector—Kevin O'Leary's piece on the Board of Water Supply is sure to upend some assumptions—to the arts, where Adrienne LaFrance talks to some of the people responsible for making a real difference in the quality and quantity of live entertainment in Honolulu. We've also include a few voices from folks about town, and we thank Laura Chartier for finding them.

This is also a chance to mention some other positive developments we've noticed lately. Why not?

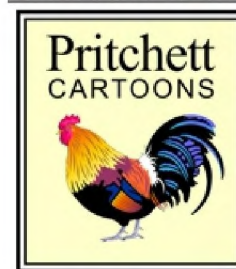
- Three local schools—Momi Elementary, Royal Elementary and 'Ewa Beach Elementary—were named Blue Ribbon Schools this year, a high national honor that recognizes both academic excellence and dramatic improvement in student achievement.
- A combination of citizens' groups and elected officials—including at least one Republican—has changed the tone vis a vis development in Hawaii Kai, and the farmers of Kamilo Nui have at least some hope of sticking



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around past the expiration of their leases over the next decade.

- The University of Hawaii broke the gender barrier this year by hiring its first female president. Less than 15 percent of research universities nationwide are headed by women. As we enter 2010, the executive branch, the state senate and the state university are all led by women, a fact that, while obviously not guaranteeing success on its own terms, is a sign of progress.

- In addition to the much-discussed massive commitment to rail, the federal government recently approved roughly \$3.5 million for a rural bus program in Hawaii.

- As part of that same omnibus funding bill, Congress approved more than \$18 million for combined sea turtle and 'ahi preservation efforts.

- We've become more environmentally aware: initiatives across the public and private sectors in recent years have made solar energy a hot commodity in the Islands, and eco-friendly thinking is going mainstream. The Legislature passed a number of environmentally friendly measures in 2009, including money to fight invasive species and to recycle electronic waste.

- Bishop Museum's newly renovated and reimagined Hawaiian Hall opened this year to lots of aloha, giving the museum a more contemporary sensibility and opening Hawaiian history to a new generation of visitors.

- Six years ago, filmmaker Alexander Payne turned California's Central Coast into an trendy destination overnight with his film *Sideways*. Payne is set to begin production on *The Descendants*, based on the novel of contemporary Hawaii by Kauai Hart Hemmings, in the spring.

- Young innovators are doing something almost unheard-of in Honolulu: building a fashionable commercial and entertainment destination from the ground up, with no big corporate funding. No, Chinatown isn't as busy as Ala Moana or "Ward." Yes, it's a lot more fun.

- Kona Brewing Co. is going gangbusters as one of the fastest-growing brands in the United States, but the good news for us is that it's becoming easier and easier to find local brews of all stripes in bars, restaurants and even convenience stores.

- The City transportation department came out with a draft bicycling master plan that, if approved, will virtually quintuple the total lane-miles of bike lanes on Oahu at relatively limited expense. It's not exactly a circle-island dedicated path, but it's a lot better than what we've had.

- Lawrence Tseu, a local dentist and supporter of civic causes, recently

gave \$20,000 to help keep state libraries open.

- A land conservation project in North Kohala has been ranked as the top nationwide priority for a coastal estuary protection program administered by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration and will receive \$1.25 million in federal funds next year. The Lapakahi project is part of the Trust for Public Land's Legacy Land Conservation Program, which draws 10 percent of the conveyance tax from Hawaii real estate transactions and will pay the remainder of the \$2.5 million purchase price for the property.

- System-wide, UH enrollment topped 50,000 for the first time in 2009. That 29.2 percent of Hawaii residents have completed a bachelor's degree or higher puts us, perhaps surprisingly, in the top 15 states when it comes to educational attainment—when you look at the top 10, it's clear to see that economic benefits await states that support higher education.

Obviously, it's not a comprehensive list. But at the end of the year, we're pleased to focus on what's good in Honolulu and around the state, and feel refreshed for having had the reminder that while the chips may be down, we're never out. Oh yeah, one more.

- If you're reading this, you're probably in Honolulu, Hawaii, right now. How sweet is that?

Happy holidays from everyone at the *Weekly*.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS!

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LETTERS

Good thing the rail debate isn't getting old at all

DEC 23, 2009 | [SHARE](#)   

I write in response to the criticism that Kirk Caldwell directed at Curt Sanburn [Letters, 12/9]. It is interesting that Mr. Caldwell claims that the "Federal Government provides several layers of oversight and approval." The City has not yet received final approval of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which means the recent awarding of a construction contract is highly premature and could jeopardize the expected Federal Funding.

Bus Rapid Transit, High Occupancy Lanes and Light Rail at grade are all systems that are far more appropriate to Honolulu than the present overhead expensive City project. Those alternate systems were all but ignored in the EIS prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff.

Mr. Caldwell says little about costs. The present estimate for the rail project is \$5.4 billion dollars for a 20-mile line. This works out to \$270 million a mile or \$5,900 per capita. Light rail at-grade is a far more efficient and cost-effective, far superior, quieter and less intrusive on the environment than the proposed overhead heavy rail system.

Geoffrey Paterson

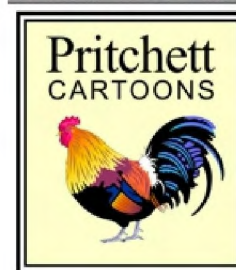
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December 24, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Transit idea

Name system after President Obama

Rather than renaming Magic Island in honor of the president, Mufi should, if the transit system comes to pass, name the transit system the President Obama Express or the Obama Express.

JIMMY MURAKI | Pearl City

Letters to the editor

For Saturday, December 26, 2009

Monorail would be better choice

With everyone debating about rail, I wish to add my opinion toward this project that will revolutionize our transportation culture.

Why didn't the rail planners decide monorail as the ultimate solution? As I walk home from school every day, I pass through the Pearlridge mall, viewing the sleek rail technology.

According to a Discovery Channel show on monorails, the Las Vegas rubber-tired monorail runs up to 50 miles an hour, enough to comfortably transport Honolulu passengers using a similar concept. With this type of technology, nobody has to complain about obstruction of views while getting to places on time.

In addition, on a recent vacation to the Philippines, mass transit was an excellent alternative to bumper-to-bumper traffic as the trains snake through Manila's populated centers.

Once people realize that rail is faster than vehicular transport during rush hour, more people will ride on rail, causing a decline in traffic almost immediately.

As a supporter of rail transit, I have confidence in our planned 20-mile elevated system that will change the way we live.

Jason Delos Reyes
Aiea High School 11th-grader

December 27, 2009

Letters to the Editor

Rail Transit

Elevated system offers best choice

Three architects who signed a Dec. 13 letter, "Focus on the best system for people," do not understand the scrutiny the Honolulu rail transit project has undergone. This is why The Advertiser's editorials and so many others like us are coming out in support of the project.

As architects working on the project, we have followed the process and support elevated rail. The Advertiser editorial correctly points out that an at-grade system has many shortcomings and is less suitable for Honolulu. These are the issues that we, as architects, face in the design of any project. The at-grade issue was studied by experts and rejected years ago.

The Dec. 13 letter tries to give the impression the public hasn't had its say. People voted for rail, elected officials voted to support rail, and our Congressional delegation led by Sen. Daniel Inouye continues to support this project. A recent poll showed nearly 70 percent of O'ahu residents think rail is a good investment.

We believe that elevated rail is the best system for Honolulu. We look forward to helping this project become a reality and ensuring that it is done in a way that will best fit in its surroundings.

Signed by 12 architects, including:

KEN CASWELL | AIA

SHAUN USHIJIMA | AIA

MAURICE YAMASATO | AIA

ROLAND LIBBY | AIA

JAMES L. STONE | AIA

LORRIN MATSUNAGA | AIA

DWIGHT K. MITSUNAGA | AIA

December 27, 2009

Economic woes dominated year

*BY MICHAEL TSAI**Advertiser Staff Writer*

With the end of a tumultuous 2009 upon us, we might be excused for believing that every local news story this year in one way or another bore the whiff of our continued economic struggles.

This was, after all, the year when furlough Fridays entered our local lexicon, when it seemed we were as likely to bump into friends and neighbors at the unemployment office as at the neighborhood grocery store, when thousands cut personal expenses yet still found ways to support local libraries or high school sports programs or one of the scores of social service programs struggling to provide help to the growing population of the needy.

Yet, there was more to 2009 than just the state of the economy.

For those end-of-days types, it was a year with its share of tragic and bizarre crime, a year of devastating human tragedy across the South Pacific, a year of frightening pandemic.

Yet, it was also a year in which a local son assumed the highest office in the nation, when a Belgian priest who devoted his life to Hawai'i's outcasts ascended to sainthood, and when the exalted sovereign of a former enemy returned to the Islands in a show of continued friendship.

And it was another year in which good news and bad was often determined by our own political, social, cultural or religious proclivities. A civil unions bill died in the face of vehement opposition from a coalition of religious interests. The Superferry left for more hospitable waters, becoming a cautionary tale on the dangers of fast-tracking. And the 15-year battle over ceded lands ended with a compromise between defendants and the state and a Supreme Court dismissal of the remaining claim.

We bid welcome to a new police chief and said goodbye to two prominent City Council members, a venerable civil rights leader, a beloved kumu hula and a legendary newsman.

In sports, Michelle Wie finally earned PGA victory No. 1 while University of Hawai'i women's volleyball coach Dave Shoji notched career win No. 1,000. UH women's basketball coach Jim Bolla lost big on and off the court and UH football coach Greg McMackin recovered from a regrettable slip of the tongue (and his team's mid-season swoon) to guide the Warriors to within one win of a post-season berth.

Indeed, the End of the Aughts was a tale of an embattled economy and so much more. Here, then, are the top news stories of the year, as determined by Honolulu Advertiser editors and reporters.

it's the economy

Gov. Linda Lingle's recently announced intention to delay tax refunds, redirect hotel-room tax revenues, raise taxes on insurance commissions, end life insurance payments for state workers and retirees and end the state's reimbursement of some Medicare costs for spouses of retired state workers was just the latest in a year full of grim announcements from lawmakers, economic forecasters and private business leaders.

With experts predicting a \$1.2 billion deficit through June 2011, thanks in no small part to sagging tourism counts, the state's efforts to cut costs have affected every department and by extension nearly

every Hawai'i resident in some fashion. Across-the-board cuts left many scrambling to preserve their core services with reduced staffing and reduced hours. Some got creative, like the Department of Land and Natural Resources, which softened the blow by leasing unused properties. But none escaped entirely as everything from fish stock breeding to programs for the disabled danced on the budgetary chopping block.

The cutbacks could even affect 2010 elections in Hawai'i, considered one of the most pivotal in recent memory with races for governor, lieutenant governor, Honolulu mayor, and Congressman Neil Abercrombie's seat.

Abercrombie is resigning from Congress to pursue the governor's position. Former congressman Ed Case, state Senate President Colleen Hanabusa and Hono-lulu City Councilman Charles Djou are all in contention for the vacated seat.

And the state Office of Elections has said it may not be able to afford a special election for the seat.

Perhaps no decision was as hotly debated as the mandatory furlough of thousands of state employees.

Proposed as a better alternative to deep cuts in personnel, the furlough program altered the rhythm of Hawai'i's work week — and not just for the specific departments affected. Before long, restaurants and other businesses that depend on state worker traffic were also forced to adopt a four-day-week schedule.

After lengthy bargaining, public school teachers represented by the Hawaii State Teachers Association also agreed to take 17 furlough days, equivalent to an 8 percent pay cut. The move angered many parents who objected to their children losing instruction days and who were forced to secure child care for the off days. The furloughs also elicited a rebuke from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

The University of Hawai'i also felt the economic crunch, with classes consolidated or canceled (despite increased enrollment systemwide) while administrators and the faculty union tried in vain to reach accord on a new agreement.

Furloughs, retirements and natural attrition allowed the state to reduce the number of planned layoffs, initially estimated at 1,100. Yet, some 650 state workers found themselves out of work starting Nov. 13, adding to a roster of unemployed that strained the coffers of the state's unemployment insurance fund.

The unemployment rate stood at 4.9 percent in November 2008 but by May had climbed to a 31-year high of 7.4 percent. Neighbor Islands were hit the hardest. Last month, Hawai'i County recorded 10 percent unemployment, with Maui County (9.3 percent) and Kaua'i County (9.2 percent) close behind. The statewide unemployment rate leveled off somewhat late in the year, but still lingers around 7 percent.

The economic downturn was further evident in the number of Isle bankruptcy filings, which rose 40 percent to a four-year high of 2,906.

Many of the filings appeared to be housing related, as struggling residents turned to bankruptcy to stave off foreclosure.

Notable business bankruptcies included filings by the 109-year-old Honolulu Symphony, 'Aiea-based Hawai'i Biotech and the Honolulu Medical Group.

The news media, which has been struggling with declining advertising sales for years, also felt the pinch. After suffering a 30 percent decrease in ad revenues from local businesses over the past three years, Raycom, owner of local TV stations KHNL and K5, merged news operations with KGMB9 in October. The move resulted in a staff reduction of about one-third, including all but four of KHNL's on-air talent.

The overall economic malaise hit social service organizations particularly hard as those devoted to

feeding the hungry and caring for the homeless had to find ways to serve a growing roster of clients with fewer resources.

A November survey of 106 health, human service and housing agencies conducted by the Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations and PHOCUSED, a nonprofit consortium, found that fewer than half of respondents felt they were still able to provide high-quality service, while more than half had to cut staff and/or reduce programs or services.

As the year progressed, those with vested interest in particular programs and services organized targeted fundraising efforts.

The Save Our Sports program raised more than \$1.3 million for local high school sports, drawing support from a wide variety of local businesses. Two separate fundraising drives for Hawai'i's public libraries took in nearly \$270,000 by year's end and helped embattled libraries across the state keep their doors open amid staffing shortages and other budget considerations.

Local fund drives were also initiated to provide assistance for those in the Philippines and Sāmoa following a series of disasters in September.

Hundreds were killed and thousands left homeless when a pair of typhoons hit the Philippines, causing widespread flooding. Days later, a massive 8.3 undersea earthquake triggered a tsunami that smashed into Sāmoa and American Sāmoa, leveling villages and killing more than 170 people.

The local response to both disasters was swift, with benefit concerts, individual collections and organized fund drives raising hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations. The actual level of local support was likely much higher as many residents with close ties to Sāmoa and the Philippines were believed to have made direct contributions to friends and family in the affected areas.

Hawai'i's spirit of giving was exemplified by eBay founder Pierre Omidyar and his wife, Pam, who pledged \$50 million over six years to the Hawai'i Community Foundation. Part of the donation will be used to fund a Community Stabilization Initiative aimed at helping families hurting from the recession.

While experts have differed in their timetables for economic recovery, hoteliers continued to invest in the future. In January, the Royal Hawaiian Hotel reopened following an \$85 million redesign and renovation. Last month, the luxury hotel-condominium Trump International Hotel Waikiki Beach Walk held a soft opening with a Hawaiian blessing and live music; a grand opening celebration is scheduled for next month.

golden anniversary

The state of the local economy was just one factor in what proved to be a subdued commemoration of Hawai'i's 50th anniversary of statehood.

Studiously avoiding the pomp and circumstance that marked the state's silver anniversary in 1984, organizers emphasized that official observance of the milestone was to be viewed as a commemoration, not a celebration — an acknowledgement of a political and social environment in which many Hawaiians and their supporters view statehood as a negative development in the history of the host culture.

In lieu of parades or fireworks, the state sponsored an ambitious all-day conference aimed at addressing the next 50 years.

To be sure, the close of Hawai'i's first 50 years as a state seemed auspicious as Hawai'i-born Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th president of the United States. Obama's inauguration speech was carried live by every major local news outlet and his impromptu shaka flashing was greeted by raucous applause in homes, offices and bars around the state.

Obama's rise to the presidency raised the profile of his native state in predictable and unpredictable ways. Obama's time in the Islands was approached from various perspectives in news magazines,

editorial pages, even Sports Illustrated, while so-called "birthers" made the Hawai'i-Obama connection a central issue in their contention that the president was actually born in Kenya and therefore was not eligible to run for office.

While Obama was settling in to the White House, Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko renewed their relationship with Hawai'i with a visit in July. While here, they paid their respects to fallen soldiers at Pearl Harbor, visited a shower tree that then-Prince Akihito planted at Kapi'olani Park 50 years ago, and attended a dinner for the Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship program.

For Hawai'i's Catholic community, the highlight of the year may have been the canonization of Father Damien de Veuster, whose legacy of service to the Hansen's disease colony on Kalaupapa, Moloka'i, made him an iconic figure.

A large contingent of Hawai'i residents flew to Rome for the ceremony, including Audrey Toguchi, whose recovery from cancer was considered one of Damien's two documented miracles. In Hawai'i, Catholic churches hosted live viewing parties and church officials encouraged Catholics and non-Catholics alike to follow Damien's example.

myriad concerns

As a gateway between East and West, Hawai'i was a hot spot of concern as H1N1 developed into a pandemic. The first recorded death in Hawai'i due to the disease was reported in June, the start of a surge in H1N1 cases locally and nationally. Concerns over the disease would have a negative impact on an already struggling tourism industry.

With a second surge predicted for the fall, hundreds of doctors and pharmacies signed up to receive newly developed H1N1 vaccines, but limited supplies left many patients stranded on long waiting lists as the vaccine was distributed according to national prioritization guidelines.

After years of heated debate, O'ahu's \$5.5 billion rail transit system inched closer to realization. In October, the city tapped Kiewit Pacific Co. to design and build the first phase of the raised system (Kapolei to Pearl Highlands) at a cost of \$483 million. Critics accused Hono-lulu Mayor Mufi Hannemann of rushing the project without first securing federal funds necessary for completion.

While the rail debate continues to rage, other controversial issues came to surprisingly quiet resolution this year.

A bill that would have allowed for civil unions failed to advance through the Legislature. In February, thousands of people representing a host of local churches descended on the state Capitol to protest House Bill 444. The protest was organized by the Hawai'i Family Forum, headed by former state Rep. Dennis Arakaki.

In March, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Hawai'i Supreme Court had erred by relying on the 1993 Congressional Apology Resolution as the legal basis for a moratorium on sales of ceded lands. That prompted an agreement between the state and four of five plaintiffs who had sued to keep the state from selling ceded lands until claims by Native Hawaiians were resolved.

The agreement requires that the governor obtain two-thirds approval from both houses of the state Legislature before selling any of the 1.2 million acres of ceded lands.

The Hawai'i Supreme Court later dismissed claims by the final plaintiff, UH Hawaiian studies professor Jonathan Osorio, effectively ending the 15-year-old case.

Also in March, the Hawai'i Superferry shut down operations after the Hawai'i Supreme Court ruled the company couldn't operate without completing an environmental impact statement. The company filed for bankruptcy in May.

In a more literal sense, the Navy's USS Port Royal, a guided missile cruiser, ran aground in February after what investigators described as a series of navigational errors. The accident damaged coral

structures in an area off the Honolulu International Airport's reef runway, prompting some nine months of repair. The Port Royal also required \$40 million in repairs (more than twice the amount needed to restore the historic USS Missouri, which entered drydock in October).

Capt. John Carroll was relieved of his command of the Port Royal following the accident.

troubling crimes

Last month, Capt. Louis Kealoha was selected to lead the Honolulu Police Department. Kealoha takes over a department that spent the last year pursuing myriad disturbing cases.

- In February, a man stabbed two hikers on the Koko Crater Trail in Hawai'i Kai. After an hours-long manhunt in the area, police arrested Benjamin Davis, who was found naked and hiding in a tree. Both victims were seriously injured but survived.
- A month later, Wai'anae High School teacher Asa Yamashita was stabbed to death while sitting outside the Ewa Town Center. The suspect in the case, Tittleman Fauatea, has a history of mental problems and may have mistaken Yamashita for another woman, according to a psychologist who examined him.
- In September, police investigated the alleged rape of a 12-year-old Kamehameha student by two fellow students. Two 13-year-old boys were arrested in connection with the repeated assaults, which allegedly occurred over the course of one weekend in August. The school was widely criticized for not reporting the incident directly to police.

sporting life

It was a typically up-and-down year for Hawai'i sports.

In April, UH women's basketball coach Jim Bolla was fired amid allegations that he kicked junior guard Leilani Galdones during a practice. Bolla, who previously had been investigated for bullying players and making comments about a former player's sexuality, has sued the university for wrongful termination.

UH football coach Greg McMackin attracted national attention over the summer when he used a homosexual slur in an offhand comment about the Notre Dame football team, which beat the Warriors in the 2008 Hawai'i Bowl. McMackin held a news conference to apologize for the comment and agreed to a suspension and reduction in pay.

McMackin came under fire again, this time for his sideline abilities, when the injury-plagued Warriors dropped six consecutive games during their 2009 campaign. The Warriors responded by winning their next four games, including an impressive victory over Navy that brought them to within one win of an automatic return to the Hawai'i Bowl. The season ended with a lopsided defeat at the hands of Wisconsin.

UH volleyball fans had plenty to cheer about in October, when coach Dave Shoji notched his 1,000th win with a victory over New Mexico State, and again this month when the team advanced to the Final Four for the first time in six years.

Local golfer Michelle Wie also enjoyed a prosperous 2009. Burdened by premature hype early in her career and slowed by a serious wrist injury two years ago, Wie silenced many doubters by accumulating a 3-0-1 record for Team USA in the Solheim Cup in August, then following up with her first PGA win at the Lorena Ochoa Invitational in November.

final farewells

In 2009, Hawai'i bid aloha to several high-profile residents who left a lasting mark on the state, including former Hawai'i congressman and lieutenant governor Tom Gill, City Council members Barbara

Marshall and Duke Bainum, former KGMB news anchor Bob Sevey, hula great George Naope and local author Ian MacMillan.



NEW YORK TIMES

Bond between a town and its railroad is tested

By Kirk Johnson / New York Times

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 27, 2009

DENTON, Mont. » The billionaire investor Warren E. Buffett, in buying control of the nation's second-biggest railroad last month, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, said he believed in America's future and the role that railroads would play in building that future.

On a much, much smaller scale, the eight employees of the Central Montana Railroad say the same thing. In their case, the belief is drilled down to the grass-roots level and to the future of Denton, population 300, from which the Central's tiny, 84-mile empire extends.

The question facing this part of Montana, as tough economic times have stressed farming and railroading alike, is which future — the macro or the micro — to believe in and fight for.

"If this railroad goes down, Denton will dry up and blow away," Dennis Ayers, 38, said as he eased engine No. 1809 — an Eisenhower-era relic, like Central's five other engines, all refurbished from the scrap yard — into the shop building on a recent afternoon.

Burlington Northern officials say they understand, too, the stress that agricultural communities are under. But farmers have to survive first if towns like Denton are to have any hope at all — and cheaper rail shipping costs are the means to that end, they said.

Last month, Burlington Northern shut off payments to the Central that had been locked in for years by contract — by coincidence, company officials say, around the time Buffett took over — prompting a lawsuit by the state of Montana on Central's behalf. Burlington officials said the payments had inflated shipping costs for local farmers.

The big railroad has also been offering discounts if farmers bypass the Central and truck their wheat, the big cash crop in this part of Montana, directly to the main Burlington Northern line about 40 miles from here. A text-message system was recently established to alert growers to the best prices.

Many people have voted with their wallets. The number of railcars and bushels of wheat loaded by the Central here in Denton this year is expected to be the second lowest in 22 years, according to preliminary figures from the railroad, beating only the brutal drought year of 2003.

"They're competing with the rest of the world," said Kevin Kaufman, Burlington Northern's group vice president for agricultural products, referring to Montana's wheat farmers, who compete with growers in Canada, Australia and elsewhere. "It's our job as a transportation provider to provide a cost-effective,

efficient system so that they can do that."

At the backdrop of everything is Montana's tumultuous railroad history. For decades, beginning in the late 1800s, it was one of the most fought-over states in the nation, with up to five major railroads at one time competing for business.

Now it is one of the least competitive, with Burlington Northern controlling about 95 percent of everything that moves on rail — a near monopoly that Montana's attorney general, Steve Bullock, said made the survival of the Central Montana more crucial than ever, to give farmers a choice of how and where to ship.

The Central Montana itself was born in the retreat of that competitive era. Its track system was orphaned in the early 1980s by the bankruptcy of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad. The state eventually acquired the line in the bankruptcy settlement and set up the Central as a nonprofit community development corporation in 1985.

"This is about the Central Montana and its 80-odd miles," Bullock said. "It's also about the 1,800 miles that the Burlington Northern holds — and for us to make sure that that concentration doesn't increase and we become even more captive."

So is the Burlington Northern a bully or a savior? And is the Central Montana a railroad of small-town nostalgia, living on fumes and the memories of a simpler past, or a linchpin of community survival?

Like so many other stories at the frontier of economic life — from the local battles over Wal-Mart to the debate over how big banks did or did not bring on the housing crisis — the answers are less black and white or David and Goliath than either side suggests.

Farms have also consolidated here over the last 25 years, with fewer farmers making more high-volume shipping decisions — meaning that a few pennies more per bushel is a bigger consideration. Fewer farms also mean fewer people, which stresses local communities like Denton.

"The railroad's trouble, depressed farming, drought — it all hits us at once," said Bill Phillips, the schools superintendent in Denton, where enrollment has fallen more than 30 percent over the last decade, to 102 students this year, in kindergarten through 12th grade. Phillips said that two more students were moving out before the new year.

Wheat farmers like Richard L. Barber and Ken Glass are caught in the middle of those blustering winds, and each has gone a different way.

Glass, 70, seeking the best prices he can, trucks his wheat to the Burlington elevator about 45 miles from here.

"I have the trucks, so it makes sense for me," he said on a recent morning over breakfast the Back Roads Cafe, Denton's 7 a.m. social hub.

Barber, 66, sitting at the counter a few feet away, said he shipped locally, taking his wheat to the grain elevator here in Denton, where it is picked up by the Central Montana and transferred down the line to Burlington Northern and its ultimate destination on the West Coast.

"We try to do all the business we can to support the town and the community and the businesses,"

Barber said.

Farming and railroading are also intertwined in Denton. Carla Allen, 57, Central's general manager, grew up in Denton, the daughter of a career trackman who worked most of his career on the old Milwaukee Road. But her grandfather was a farmer, she said, who hauled his wheat by wagon before the railroad first came to this part of Montana around 1914.

Her husband, Russ, is manager of the agricultural co-op and grain elevator in Denton. Russ Allen, sitting with a group of farmers over breakfast at the cafe, said he understood why farmers had to steer the best economic course. And Burlington Northern's new text-messaging system, he said, is a particularly effective tool in that. But he has a way to fight back, too, he said: intimate knowledge about each farmer and his or her economic situation and crop.

"I know who needs the money," he said.

The co-op is also setting up its own text-messaging system, he added, aiming for operation by January.

Find this article at:

http://www.starbulletin.com/news/nyt/20091227_Bond_between_a_town_and_its_railroad_is_tested.html



Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Letters to the editor

For Thursday, December 31, 2009

POSTED: 01:30 a.m. HST, Dec 31, 2009

Driver courtesy has diminished

I'm home for the holiday and glad to be back where the weather is warm and I can eat good local food. However, one thing I've noticed is that traffic has gotten worse, just over the last a year. There are a lot more people on the road, and less courtesy among drivers.

I own a car, but back at school I take transit every chance I get. It's cheaper and convenient, and I don't have to find or pay for parking. I'm pleased to hear that Honolulu's rail project is proceeding.

Sara-Anne Lee
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Honolulu Rail Transit Project



Presentation

- I. Project Overview
- II. Project History & Process
- III. Economic Conditions
- IV. Project Visuals
- V. Project Schedule

20-Mile Route

Kapolei to Ala Moana Center



Traffic Benefits

- Reduce future traffic delay by about 20%
- Remove more than 30,000 cars and trucks from our roads each day



Operating Details

- **When will trains run?**

- From 4 a.m. to midnight
- Every 3 minutes at morning and afternoon rush hour
- 6 minutes at mid-day
- 10 minutes at night

- **How fast will trains travel?**

- Over 55 mph top speed;
30 mph average with stops



Operating Details

- **How much will a ride cost?**
 - Same as TheBus; one-way transfers valid on both
- **How do I get to a rail station?**
 - Every station will have bus stops, bike paths and walking paths
 - Four park-and-rides totaling 4,100 parking spaces



Travel Times to Ala Moana Center Station

From:	Time:
East Kapolei Station	42 minutes
Waipahu Transit Center	31 minutes
Pearlridge Station	24 minutes
Airport Station	16 minutes
Kalihi Station	10 minutes
Downtown Station	4 minutes

Public Decisions

- December 22, 2006
- City Council selected fixed guideway in exclusive Right-of-Way
- Known as the Locally Preferred Alternative
- Established route, elevated guideway in downtown

Public Decisions

- **Transit Mode**

- Fixed guideway in exclusive Right-of-Way

- **Alignment**

- Now – East Kapolei to Ala Moana Center
- Future – Kapolei to UH Mānoa and Waikīkī

- **Vehicle Technology**

- Steel wheel on steel rail – “Light Metro”
- Widely used, durable, cost-effective

FTA New Starts Funding

- FTA has agreed to consider a funding request of \$1.55 billion

Federal Funding

- Federal funds to date:
 - \$4M in federal stimulus funds awarded
 - \$35M appropriated by Congress
- FY2010:
 - \$30M pending in Congress

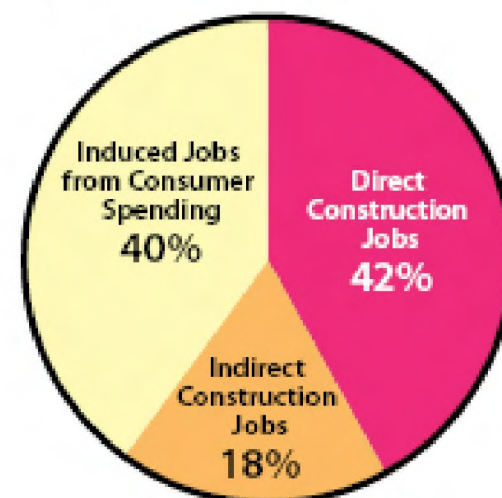
General Excise and Use Tax

- GET surcharge spread over 16 years, sunsets in 2022.
- City's forecast: The middle ground of economic "boom & bust" cycle
- GET revenues follow the economy; when economy rises, so will GET revenues

Economic Benefits

- Building rail will fight the recession
- Creating 10,000 jobs a year
- State's largest job creating project

Employment Created by Rail Construction*



*Person years of employment.

RAIL WILL CREATE 10,000 JOBS A YEAR ON AVERAGE

10,000

**RETAIL
RESTAURANT
ENTERTAINMENT
SERVICES
SMALL BUSINESS**

**OVER
4,000
CONSTRUCTION
JOBS**

*Honolulu High Capacity Corridor Transit Project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement, November 2008

At Grade or Street Rail

- Slower
- Stuck in traffic congestion
- Higher long-term operating costs
- Less frequent trips
- Fewer riders
- More construction and land use impacts

Street Rail Construction in Phoenix



Trench along entire route for trackbed;
relocate all underground utilities

Road widening and right of way
acquisitions





**At-grade train: a two-lane road
becomes a one-way street for cars**

Houston

Houston



At-grade train stations require wide sidewalks that downtown Honolulu lacks

Walkers and bikers must cross in front of an at-grade train



What Could Elevated Rail Look Like in Honolulu?

What Could It Look Like?



Rail Station Designs

East Kapolei Station

Inspiration: Makai



WORTH GROUP INTERIORS, INC.

UH West O'ahu Station

Inspiration: Mauka



West Loch Station



**Inspiration:
Plantation Roofline &
Sugar Cane**



Waipahu Transit Center Station



Leeward Community College Station



Canopy Design for Stations



Aerial view



Ground view

Canopy Design for Stations



Canopy Design for Stations

evening view



Upcoming Milestones

- Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS)
 - Final EIS accepted by State
- Groundbreaking

What to expect in 2010

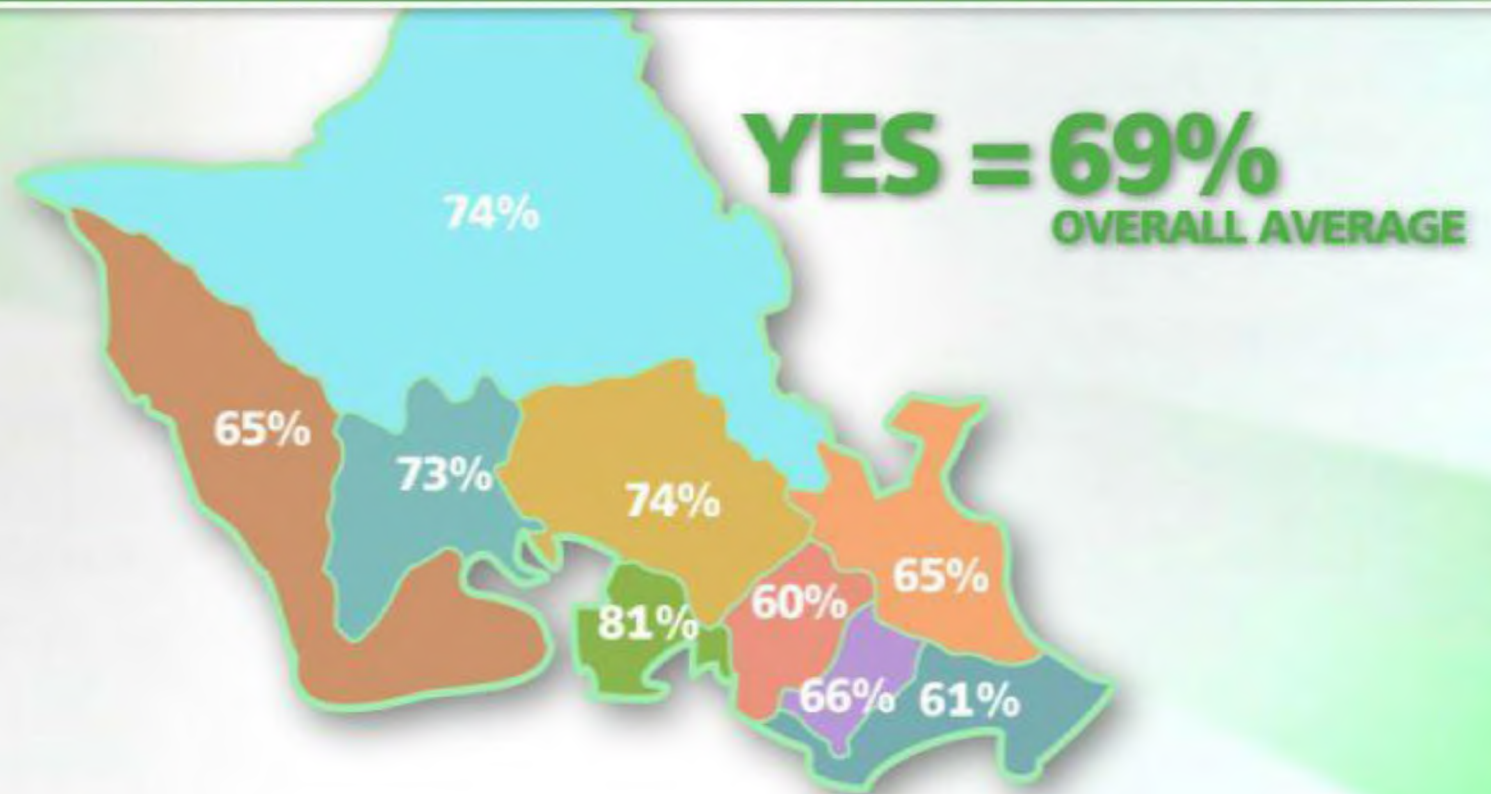
- Construction in East Kapolei
- Job creation
- \$330 million in new revenue in our economy from construction spending
- Economic growth in the recession

SUPPORT FOR RAIL TRANSIT BY CITY COUNCIL DISTRICTS

	Apo	Dela Cruz	Anderson	Djou	Kobayashi
Support	60%	63%	54%	52%	55%
Oppose	40%	36%	42%	44%	40%

	Tam	Cachola	Okino	Garcia
Support	55%	70%	67%	68%
Oppose	40%	26%	34%	31%

IS RAIL TRANSIT A GOOD INVESTMENT FOR HONOLULU'S FUTURE?



Stay Informed

- Sign up for monthly newsletter
- Watch “Honolulu on the Move” on ‘Olelo Channel 54, Mondays at 6:30 pm
- Visit www.honolulutransit.org
- Visit youtube.com/honoluluonthemove
- Follow our Tweets at [Twitter.com/hnl_rtd](https://twitter.com/hnl_rtd)
- Find us on Facebook

Mahalo!





HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT PROJECT

PROJECT SCHEDULE CHECKLIST

- ☒ Transit Surcharge Passed - 2005
- ☒ Alternatives Analysis - 2006
- ☒ Locally Preferred Alternative - 2007
- ☒ Selection of Technology - 2008
- ☒ Draft Environmental Impact Statement - 2008
- ☒ Selection of Airport Alignment - 2009
- ☒ Preliminary Engineering - 2009
- ☐ Final Environmental Impact Statement - 2009
- ☐ Record of Decision - 2009
- ☐ Groundbreaking - 2009



www.honolulutransit.org | 566-2299

Dan Inouye

U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII



Contact – Peter Boylan (808) 561-0901
and Jennifer Sabas (808) 292-9234

INOUE ANNOUNCES FEDERAL PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING APPROVAL FOR HONOLULU TRANSIT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Honolulu Mass Transit Receives Federal Approval

PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

Feds OK Honolulu rail engineering plan

Pacific Business News (Honolulu)

H O N O L U L U R A I L T R A N S I T P R O J E C T

566-2299

www.honolulutransit.org

AR00080320

**“The Business Round
Table...found the
overall plan to be
sound and
conservatively
prepared.”**

*Don Horner,
Chairman/CEO First Hawaiian Bank
on the Project Financing*

Pearlridge

Rail Station Community Workshop

December 2, 2009
Pearl Ridge Elementary School



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S



STATE OF

THE RAIL

OCTOBER 29, 2009

www.honolulutransit.org



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

- ☒ **Transit Surcharge Passed - 2005**
- ☒ **Alternatives Analysis - 2006**
- ☒ **Locally Preferred Alternative - 2007**
- ☒ **Selection of Technology - 2008**
- ☒ **Draft Environmental Impact Statement - 2008**
- ☒ **Selection of Airport Alignment - 2009**
- ☒ **Preliminary Engineering - 2009**
- ☐ **Final Environmental Impact Statement - 2009**
- ☐ **Record of Decision - 2010**
- ☐ **Groundbreaking - 2010**



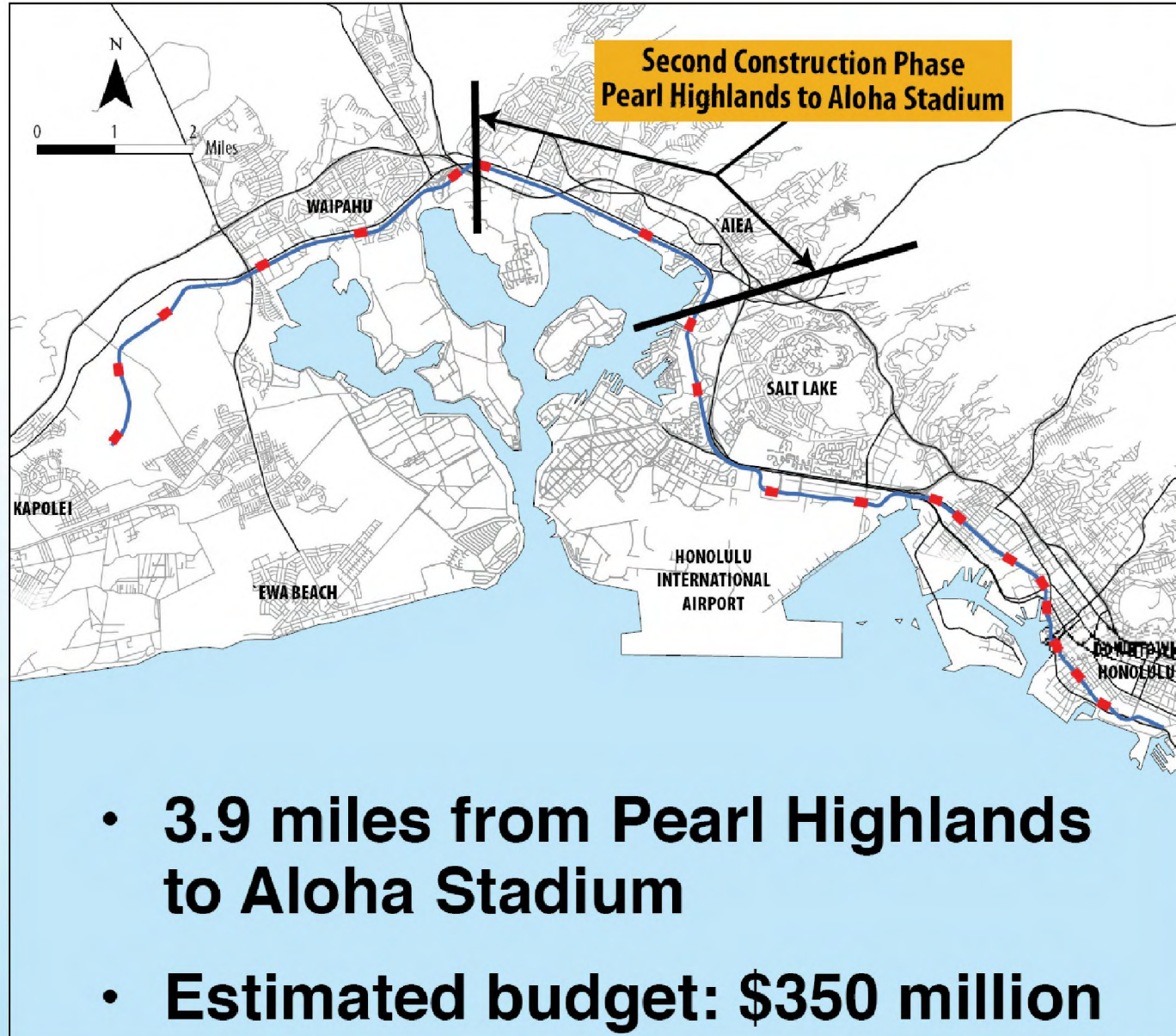
Contract with Kiewit signed

- Build first 6.5 miles of elevated rail line
 - East Kapolei to Pearl Highlands
- \$90 million less than estimated



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Second Construction RFP



Rapid Transit Stabilization Agreement

- Local labor
- High quality construction work
- On time
- On budget
- Avoid work slowdowns and stoppages



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

**“The Business Round
Table...found the
overall plan to be
sound and
conservatively
prepared.”**

***Don Horner,
Chairman/CEO First Hawaiian Bank
on the Project Financing***



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Agenda

- Project Overview & Schedule
- Station Location
- Preliminary Station Design
- Community Ideas & Breakout Sessions
- Summary of Breakout Sessions
- Next Steps – Future Meetings



HONOLULU RAIL TRANSIT



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Pearlridge Station



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Travel Times from Pearlridge

Destination	Travel Time
Kapolei	18 minutes
Leeward Community College	7 minutes
Airport	8 minutes
Downtown	20 minutes
Ala Moana Center	24 minutes



Project Schedule

- December 2009: Release of Final Environmental Impact Statement
- Early 2010: Federal Transit Administration issues Record of Decision
- Early 2010: Start construction of elevated guideway in Kapolei



Project Schedule

- Late 2012: Initial service begins in Waipahu; service expands
- Late 2013: Start construction of Pearlridge station
- Early 2017: Service begins on Kamehameha Highway
- Spring 2019: Start of full service between East Kapolei and Ala Moana Center



Elevated Guideway Simulation



Kamehameha Highway at Kaonohi Street, looking makai



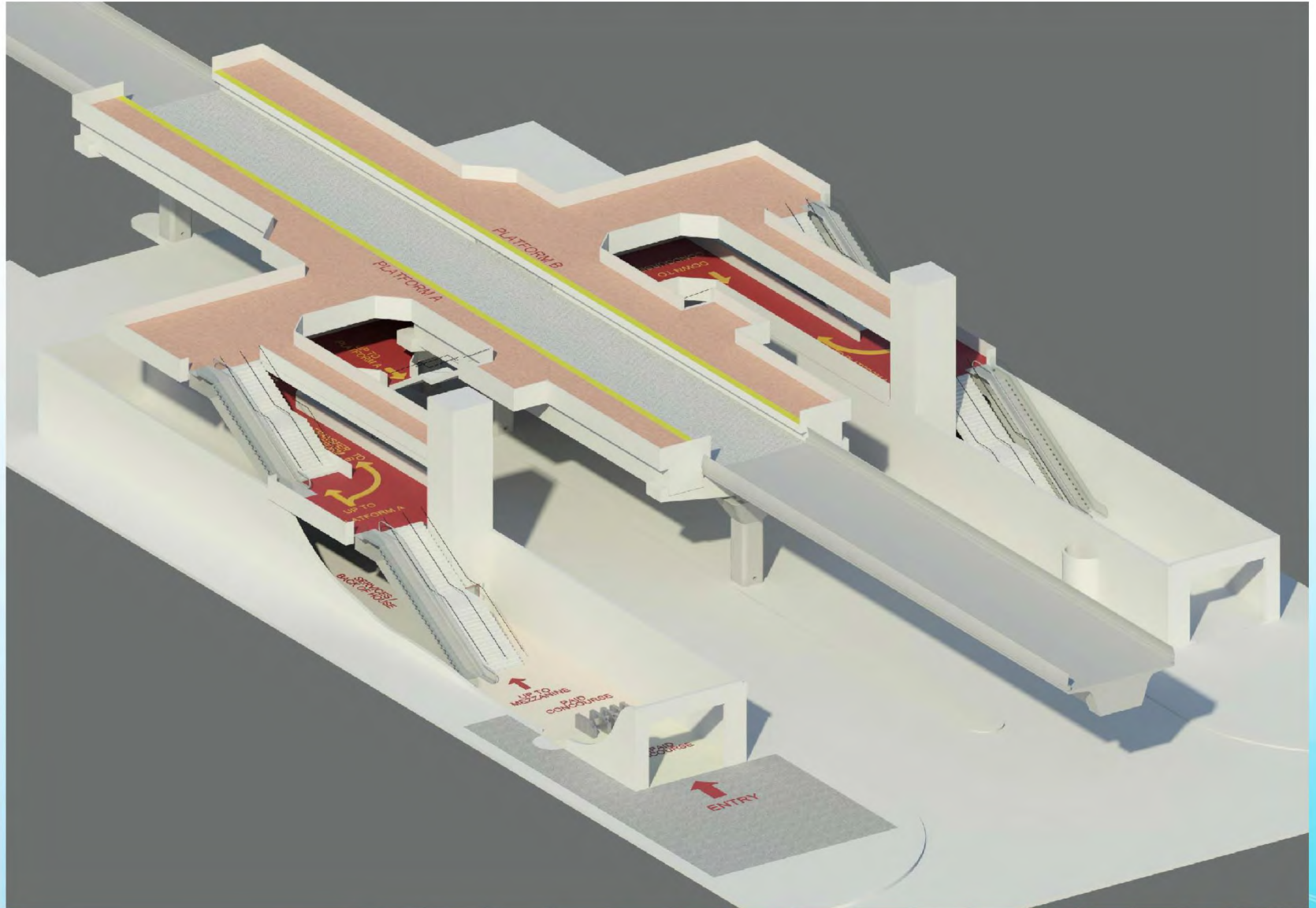
R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

Community Comments Pearlridge Station Workshop #2



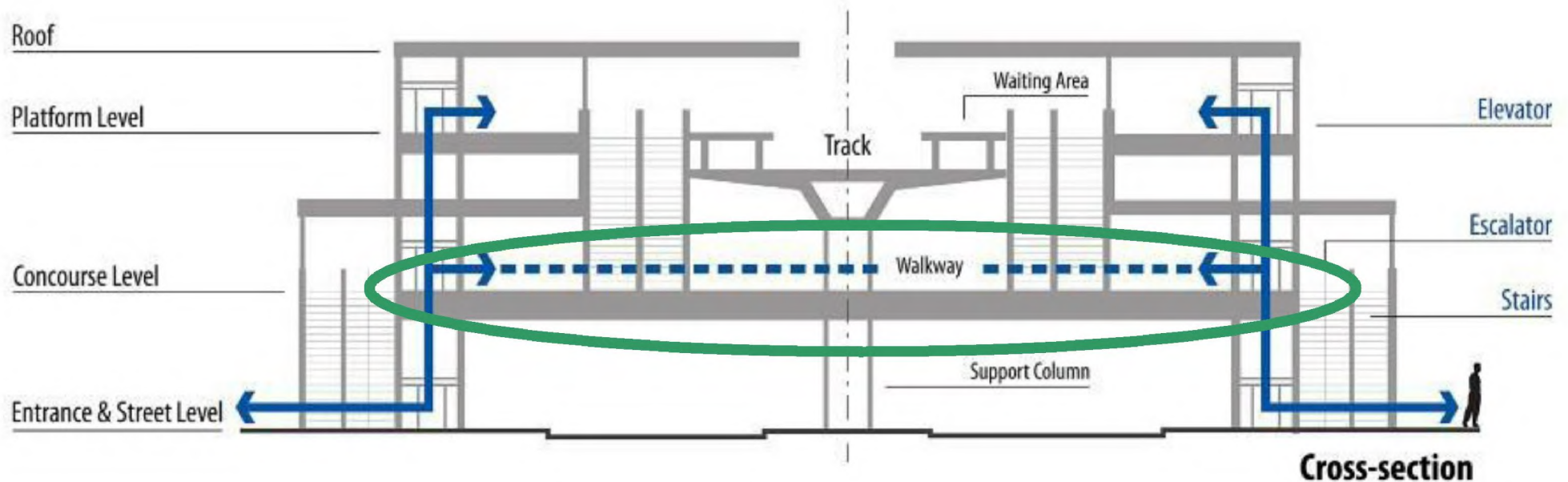
RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Typical Transit Station



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Pedestrians Can Cross Above Kamehameha Highway



RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Summary of Community Considerations

- Appearance
- Character
- History
- Culture

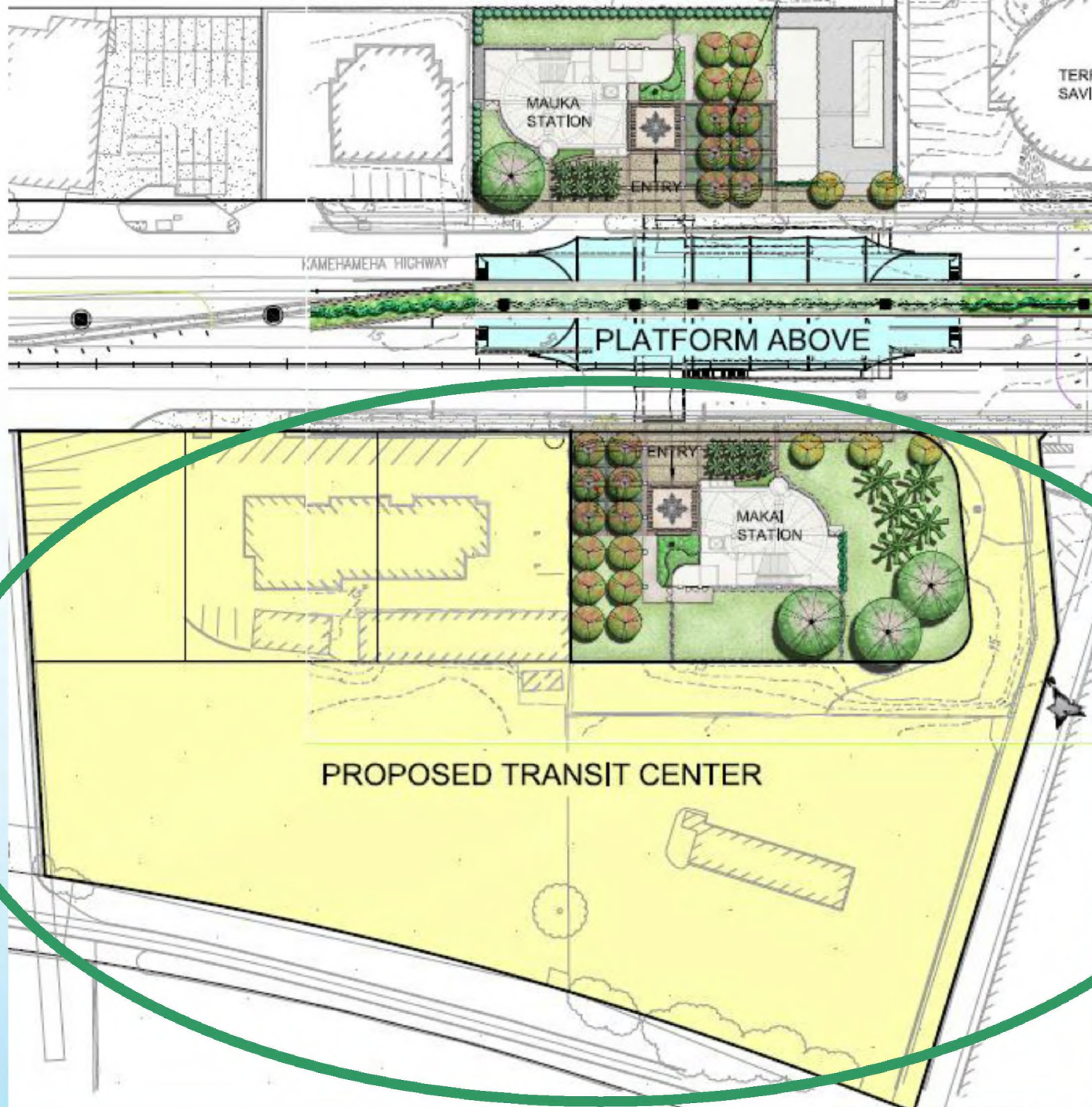


RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Summary of Community Comments

- 160 comments
- Traffic Issues
 - Kiss and ride drop off
 - Waiting parking
 - HandiVan drop off
 - Taxi parking
 - Bike and pedestrian paths





RAIL STATIONS COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

Summary of Community Comments

- Restrooms
 - Two restrooms: one in each entry building
- Station amenities
 - Seating
 - Weather protection



Restrooms in rail systems

Honolulu	Free to commuters		
San Francisco		Some closed	
Seattle		Pay to use	
Phoenix			No
Denver			No
New York			No



Summary of Community Comments

- Artwork and signage
 - Public art program
 - Signs with constantly updated arrival times
- Sustainability features
 - Solar power cells
 - Air flow in station



Pearlridge Station



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

Pearlridge Station



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

Pearlridge Station



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

Pearlridge Station



R A I L S T A T I O N S C O M M U N I T Y W O R K S H O P S

Next Steps

- Talk story with design team
- Ask questions; give your impressions of the designs



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